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THE WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER



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TORONTO

The Globe Edition

THE WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER

EDITED BY

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MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1907

First Edition 1898

Reprinted 1899, 1901, 1903, 1904, 1906. 1907

TO
FREDERICK JAMES FURNIVALL, PH.D.
FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR
OF THE CHAUCER AND EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETIES
THIS POPULAR EDITION OF THE POET
FOR WHOM HE HAS DONE SO MUCH
IS DEDICATED IN GRATITUDE
AND ESTEEM

PREFACE

EXACTLY a third of a century ago, in the year 1864, the publishers of this edition of Chaucer brought out their 'Globe' edition of Shakespeare, and it was their desire from the outset that it should be followed with as little delay as possible by a similar edition of the works of the greatest of his predecessors. The 'Globe' Shakespeare had been made possible by the previous publication of the splendid 'Cambridge' edition, in which everything that industry and scholarship could effect had been done to obtain a trustworthy text. It was naturally, therefore, to Cambridge that Mr. Alexander Macmillan turned for an edition of Chaucer, and in January 1864 he wrote to Henry Bradshaw, from whose *Memoir* by Mr. G. W. Prothero I am quoting,¹ to ask him 'to join Mr. Earle and Mr. Aldis Wright in editing a "Library" edition of Chaucer's works.' It is clear that this 'Library' edition was proposed mainly to settle the text for a 'Globe' edition, and it seems almost immediately to have been arranged that the Clarendon Press, with which Mr. Macmillan had intimate relations, should have the honour of publishing the 'Library' edition, and that the text should afterwards be used for the 'Globe.'² In March 1866 Mr. Macmillan could write to Bradshaw of his delight at hearing that 'the great Chaucer' was in 'so prosperous a condition,' and of his willingness to wait for the 'Globe' edition till after its completion; but a year or two later, Mr. Prothero tells us, it became apparent that the prospect of a large edition was becoming very uncertain, and the idea of the independent publication of a 'Globe' Chaucer was revived. 1870 brought a new scheme, Professor Earle retiring from the task and Bradshaw undertaking to edit

¹ *A Memoir of Henry Bradshaw*, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and University Librarian. By G. W. Prothero (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Co., 1888), page 108.

² This seems the most probable explanation of the apparent discrepancy between Mr. Prothero's precise statement already quoted and his subsequent remark (p. 223) that 'the standard edition of Chaucer, to range with that of Shakespeare,' was undertaken in 1864 by Professor Earle, with Mr. Aldis Wright and Mr. Bradshaw as collaborators, for the Clarendon Press.

the 'Library' edition for the Clarendon Press, with Mr. Aldis Wright and Professor Skeat as his collaborators, and twenty-four years afterwards this idea bore fruit in the noble 'Oxford Chaucer' edited by Professor Skeat, to which it is a pleasure to the present editors to doff their caps. But in the seventies Chaucer had still to stand waiting. The 'Globe' edition, as Mr. Prothero remarks, fared no better than the 'Library' one. 'From time to time Mr. Macmillan and Dr. Furnivall stirred Bradshaw up, but to no purpose. At length, in 1879, it was suggested that Bradshaw and Furnivall should do the edition together, and Bradshaw assented. They got as far as discussing the title-page, on which Bradshaw wanted his partner's name to stand first; some specimen pages were put in type" and there the matter ended. In February 1886 Bradshaw died, having done for Chaucer what he had done for many other subjects—marked out the lines on which alone good work could be done, and communicated to others something of his own enthusiasm. That so much of his learning should have died with him, is a calamity which Chaucer-students have to regret in common with philologists, bibliographers, and antiquaries of every kind. In December 1887, with the lightheartedness of his inextinguishable youth, Dr. Furnivall invited the present writer to become his collaborator, and an agreement with the Messrs. Macmillan was duly signed by us both, embracing both a 'Library' and a 'Globe' edition. But, as I have already written, 'the giant in the partnership had been used for a quarter of a century to doing, for nothing, all the hard work for other people,' and, like Bradshaw, 'could not spare from his pioneering the time necessary to enter into the fruit of his own Chaucer labours. Thus the partner who was not a giant was left to go on pretty much by himself.'¹ With the *Canterbury Tales* there was no great difficulty, for the seven manuscripts printed by the Chaucer Society made it possible to produce an adequate text without other help. But for most of the rest of Chaucer's work it was essential for success to get into touch with the manuscripts themselves, and this was for me impossible. Years previously Bradshaw had written, in excuse for his failure to produce a 'Globe' text, 'the fact is that the work would require an amount of *daylight leisure* which I can't give, and which no amount of money would enable me to buy,' and this humbler librarian was pulled up by the same difficulty. Only the length of the King's Library separated me from all the Chaucer manuscripts of the British Museum, but though the consciousness that they were there was pleasing, they were as inaccessible for continuous study as those of Oxford or Cambridge. Fortunately, I was able to find, with Dr. Furnivall's aid, first one, and then a second, and then a third helper, who could not only work at the treasures which a librarian may help to guard but must not study for his own ends, but who also possessed the scientific

¹ Preface to the 'Eversley' edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (Macmillan, 1894).

training in the English language for which Oxford offered far fewer opportunities when I was an undergraduate than it does now. It is pleasant to me to know that two of my collaborators have completed this training at the feet of those distinguished foreign scholars, Ten Brink and Zupitza; Dr. Heath and myself, like Chaucer, are Londoners; Professor McCormick is a successor of the Scottish poets and students who in the fifteenth century did so much for Chaucer's honour; and Professor Liddell is an American just called to the Chair of English Literature in the University of Texas. Thus in this popular edition of Chaucer, which, mainly through the steady persistence of the publishers, now sees the light a third of a century after its first proposal, the final workers may at least claim that they represent, however inadequately, all the different countries in which their favourite poet has been especially loved and studied.

In the division of labour which has thus been effected I have myself remained responsible for the *Canterbury Tales*, the *Legende of Good Women*, the Glossary, and the General Introduction; Professor Liddell has taken the *Boece*, the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, and the *Romaunt of the Rose*; Professor McCormick, *Troilus and Criseyde*; Dr. Heath, the *Hous of Fame*, *Parlement of Foules*, and all the shorter pieces. Each editor is responsible for his own work and for that only, and in some minor matters, as will be explained, we have each gone our own way. In the main essential, however, we have been from the first in entire agreement, for we all believe that in the present stage of our knowledge the most conservative treatment, consistent with the necessities of common sense and the known rules of Chaucerian usage, is also the best. We have endeavoured, therefore, as far as may be, to produce texts which shall offer an accurate reflection of that MS. or group of MSS. which critical investigation has shown to be the best, with only such emendation upon the evidence of other manuscripts as appeared absolutely necessary, and with the utmost parsimony of 'conjecture.' Our notes of variant readings have been greatly curtailed by consideration of space, but we have endeavoured to record most of those which have any literary or metrical importance, and I think I may say that in some cases, notably in the *Boece*, *Troilus*, and *Hous of Fame*, a real step forward has been taken towards a thoroughly critical text. As regards spelling, we are agreed in our dislike to any attempt at a uniform orthography determined by philological considerations. In the present state of our knowledge any such attempt must come perilously near that 'putting our own crotchets in place of the old scribes' habits' which Mr. Bradshaw once deprecated in editions of mediæval Latin, and which is as little to be desired as it is difficult to carry out. At the same time, every manuscript has its percentage of clerical errors or unusually repellent forms, and to reproduce these in a popular edition would be in the former case absurd, in the latter more or less undesirable. Thus, while we

have all adopted the modern usage of *u* and *v*, *i* and *j*, in other matters each editor has used his own judgment as to the extent of alteration necessary, and has explained what he has done in his introductory remarks. With our common belief that the difficulties raised by variations of spelling have been absurdly exaggerated, and our knowledge of how the balance of advantage shifts with every change of manuscripts, we see no reason to regret that while in some cases a few uncouth forms have been left in order that it might be understood that the text is taken, with only specified alterations, from a given manuscript, in other instances it has seemed advisable to do more to conciliate the eye of a modern reader. Where such alterations have been made, forms found in the Ellesmere MS. of the *Canterbury Tales* have been adopted.

Our refusal to reduce the spelling of the manuscripts to a dead level of philological correctness—were this attainable—has compelled us to use an unobtrusive dot to indicate when the letter *e* is to be fully sounded. This is the less to be regretted as Chaucer's usage in this respect is not quite so rigidly uniform as it is sometimes represented, and few readers will be inclined to grumble at this help which we have endeavoured to offer as modestly as possible.

As regards the order in which Chaucer's works are printed in this edition, the *Canterbury Tales* have been placed first, a precedence which was assigned them in all the old editions, and which is now further justified by our knowledge that they include some of the poet's earliest work, as well as much of his latest. The other pieces are arranged, to the best of my ability, in their chronological order, the Minor Poems being roughly grouped together as Earlier and Later.

There is one last word which I should like to add. The appearance of this 'Globe' edition, so soon after the *Oxford Chaucer* and the *Student's Chaucer*, which we owe to Professor Skeat, may perhaps seem superfluous, and even intrusive. Against such a criticism the fact that the publishers have contemplated this edition since 1864, while the present writer began it in 1887, these being personal matters, would be no good defence. But I think the case for the present book can be put on higher ground than this. I am so good a Chaucer-lover as to hope that in the near future the student may have not merely two texts from which to choose, but half a dozen. So long as each editor does his work afresh, each new attempt must add something to the common stock. Where independent examination of the materials gathered by the Chaucer Society, or still unprinted, has led to different results, the best text will in the end survive; where the results are the same, every fresh witness adds to the authority of the last. In some cases the texts formed by my colleagues appear to me to take the more adventurous course; but, for myself, the results I have to show for my own collations must set me quoting:—

For wel I wot, that ye han her-biforne
Of makynge ropen and lad away the corne,
And I come after glenynge here and there,
And am ful glad if I may finde an ere
Of any goodly word that ye han left.

I hope that, more especially in the *Legende*, some three or four of such 'goodly words' may be found, but in editing both this poem and the *Canterbury Tales*, and even more in the tedious task of compiling a glossary, my admiration for the thoroughness and precision of my predecessor has been continually increased. But if some future editor can find new manuscripts or overlooked readings helpful to a better text, I am sure that Dr. Skeat will join me in congratulating him on his good luck.

ALFRED W. POLLARD

CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
THE CANTERBURY TALES (xxv)*—		EARLIER MINOR POEMS, <i>continued</i>—	
A. The Prologue	1	The Complaynte of Faire Anelida and False Arcite (xxxvii) . . .	336
Knight's Tale . . .	13	The Parlement of Foules (xxxix) . . .	341
Miller's Tale . . .	44	BOECE (xl)	352
Reeve's Tale	53	TROILUS AND CRISEYDE (xli) . . .	438
Cook's Tale	59	CHAUCER'S WORDS UNTO ADAM, HIS OWNE SCRYVEYNE (xliii) . . .	558
B. Man of Law's Tale . . .	63	THE HOUS OF FAME (xliii) . . .	558
Shipman's Tale	79	THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN (xlv) .	585
Prioress's Tale	85	LATER MINOR POEMS—	
Chaucer's Tale of Sir Thopas .	89	To Rosemounde (xlv)	627
Chaucer's Tale of Melibens . .	92	The Former Age (xlvii)	627
Monk's Tale	120	Fortune (xlvii)	628
Nun's Priest's Tale	132	Truth (xlvii)	630
C. Doctor's Tale	141	Gentilesse (xlviii)	630
Pardoner's Tale	147	Lak of Stedfastnesse (xlix) . . .	630
D. Wife of Bath's Prologue . .	154	Lenvoy de Chaucer a Scogan (l) . .	631
Wife of Bath's Tale	166	The Complaynt of Venus (l) . . .	632
Friar's Tale	172	Lenvoy de Chaucer a Bukton (li) .	633
Summoner's Tale	178	The Complaynt of Chaucer to his Purse (li)	634
E. Clerk of Oxford's Tale . . .	186	Proverbe of Chaucer (lii) . . .	634
Merchant's Tale	203	DOUBTFUL MINOR POEMS—	
F. Squire's Tale	219	Merciles Beaute (lii)	634
Franklin's Tale	228	Balade ('Madame, for your newe- fangelnesse') (lii)	635
G. Second Nun's Tale	239	Complaynt Damours (liii) . . .	635
Canon's Yeoman's Tale	250	Balade of Complaynte (liii) . . .	637
H. Manciple's Tale	261	Balade that Chaucier made (liii) .	637
I. Parson's Tale	265	A TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE (liii) .	638
Here taketh the Makere of this Book his Leve	310	THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE (liv) . .	659
EARLIER MINOR POEMS—		GLOSSARY	
The Dethe of Blaunche the Duchesse (xxxii)	311		745
The Complaynte unto Pite (xxxv) .	326		
Chaucer's A B C (xxxiv)	327		
The Complaynte of Mars (xxxvi) .	329		
A Complaynte to his Lady (xxxvii)	334		

* The bracketed references in Roman numerals are to the pages of the Introduction which concern the poem.

INTRODUCTION

LIFE OF CHAUCER

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

GEOFFREY CHAUCER was the son of John Chaucer, a citizen and vintner of London. His grandfather, Robert le Chaucer, the first member of the family of whom we hear, was in 1310 appointed one of the collectors in the Port of London of the new customs upon wine granted by the merchants of Aquitaine. At the time of his death Robert held a small property in Ipswich of the annual value of twenty shillings or thereabouts, *i.e.* some £15 of our present money. The ultimate remainder of other lands in Suffolk was settled on his son John (the poet's father), and apparently for the sake of this property the lad was kidnapped on 3rd December 1324, when he was between twelve and fourteen years of age, with the object of forcibly marrying him to a certain Joan de Westhale, who had also an interest in it. John's stepfather¹ took up his cause; his kidnappers were fined £250 (a crushing amount in those days), and from a subsequent plea to Parliament for the mitigation of this penalty we learn that in 1328 John Chaucer was still unmarried. On the 12th June 1338 a protection against being sued in his absence was granted to him with some forty-five others who were crossing the sea with the King, and ten years later he acted as deputy to the King's Butler in the port of Southampton. At the time of his death, in 1366, he owned a house in Thames Street, London, and was married to Agnes, niece of Hamo de Compton,² whom we first hear of as his wife in 1349, and who, soon after his death, married again another vintner, Bartholomew atte Chapel, in May 1367. Thus we know that the poet was born after 1328, that (if his father was only married once) his mother was this Agnes, niece of Hamo de Compton, and that he may have been born in the house in Thames Street, which he subsequently inherited and sold. In October 1386, when he was called upon to give evidence in the suit between Richard, Lord Scrope, and Sir Robert Grosvenor, his age was entered as 'forty years or more,' a statement the value of which is diminished, but not destroyed, by the proved carelessness of entries as to one or two other witnesses. We shall find that the date of about 1340, which this entry suggests as that of Chaucer's birth, fits in very fairly

¹ The biographical sections of this Introduction are mainly taken, with some revision and alteration, from my *Chaucer Primer* (Macmillan, 1895).

² John's mother Mary married three times; first one Heyroun, secondly Robert le Chaucer, and thirdly his kinsman or namesake, Richard Chaucer, who at one time was supposed to have been the poet's grandfather. John's kidnapper was Thomas Stace of Ipswich, who may have been a kinsman on his mother's side.

well with everything we know of his career, and until more precise evidence is forthcoming it may be accepted as approximately correct.

The first certain information we have about Chaucer himself is of his service in the household of Elizabeth de Burgh, Countess of Ulster, and wife of Lionel, third son of Edward III. The fragments of her Household Accounts, which contain the name Galfridus Chaucer, were found, appropriately enough, in the covers of a manuscript at the British Museum, containing Lydgate's *Storie of Thebes* and Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes*. The accounts show that in April 1357 the Countess was in London, and that an entire suit of clothes, consisting of a paltock, or short cloak, a pair of red and black breeches, and shoes, was then provided for Geoffrey Chaucer, at a cost of seven shillings (*i.e.* about five guineas present value), and another purchase of clothing for him was recorded the next month. In the following December, when the Countess was at her seat at Hatfield, in Yorkshire, there is an entry of two shillings and sixpence paid to Geoffrey Chaucer 'for necessities at Christmas.' The entries of similar payments made to other members of the Countess of Ulster's household are for much larger amounts, and we must therefore conclude that, on account either of his youth or of his not being of noble birth, Chaucer's position among her retainers was not a high one. It was probably, however, sufficiently good to enable him to be present at several great festivities at Court in which we know that the Countess took part, and it may have been during the visit which John of Gaunt paid to Hatfield towards the close of 1357 that the poet first attracted his notice.

In 1359, according to his evidence in the Scrope suit, Chaucer took part in the unlucky campaign in France, serving before the town of 'Retters' (probably R  thel, not far from Rheims), until he was taken prisoner. His imprisonment did not last long, as on 1st March 1360 the King contributed £16 (£240 present value) to his ransom, a sum sufficiently large to show that both by his captors and his ransomers he was regarded as a person of some little importance. This may have arisen from his going to the war in the suite either of Prince Lionel or of the King himself. In any case, he must have been taken into the King's household about this time, as on 20th July 1367, in consideration of his past and future services, Edward III. granted him a pension, or annual salary, of twenty marks (£13 : 6 : 8) for life, under the title *dilectus valettus noster*. Chaucer was thus one of the yeomen of the King's chamber, and by Christmas 1368 had been promoted to be an esquire 'of less degree.'

On 12th September 1366 a Philippa Chaucer, one of the damoiselles of the Queen's chamber (*una domicellarum camerae Regine*), was granted a pension of ten marks yearly for life. We know that this Philippa Chaucer in 1374, and occasionally in subsequent years, received part of her pension by the hands of Geoffrey Chaucer, her husband, and there seems to be no good reason to doubt that they were married as early as 1366. It is probable, though far from certain, that the damoiselle of the Queen's chamber may be identified with Philippa Roet, daughter of Sir Payne Roet of Hainault, and sister of Katherine Roet, who, after the death of her husband, Sir Hugh Swynford, became the third wife of John of Gaunt, in whose family she had been governess. Such a roundabout connection with John of Gaunt would help to explain the many marks of favour which he bestowed on both Chaucer and his wife; but the evidence for it is at present rather slender. If we believe it, we must also hold it probable that Geoffrey and Philippa Chaucer were the parents of a Thomas Chaucer, a man of wealth and note in the next reign, who, towards the close of his life, exchanged the Chaucer arms for those of Roet; also, perhaps, of the Elizabeth Chaucer for whose novitiate at the Abbey of Barking John of Gaunt paid a considerable sum in 1381. But the only child of the poet about whom we have certain

knowledge is the little Lewis, for whom he compiled a treatise on the Astrolabe, calculated for the year 1391, when the boy was ten years old.¹

In 1369, the year after his promotion to be an esquire, Chaucer took part in the war in France. We know this from the record of a loan of £10 advanced to him by a certain Henry de Wakefield, but the record tells us nothing else. In 1370 Chaucer was abroad on the King's service, and obtained letters of protection from creditors till Michaelmas, when he returned and received his pension on 8th October. He received his pension with his own hands in 1371 and 1372, but we know nothing of his doings until 12th November of the latter year, when he was joined in a commission with two citizens of Genoa to treat with the Duke, citizens, and merchants of that place for the choice of some port in England where Genoese merchants might settle and trade. For his expenses he was allowed an advance of a hundred marks, and a further sum of thirty-eight marks was paid after his return, which took place before 22nd November 1373, when he received his pension in person.

After his return from Genoa Chaucer's affairs prospered greatly. On St. George's Day 1374 the King, then at Windsor, granted him a pitcher of wine daily. He received money in lieu of this in 1377, and the next year it was commuted for a second pension of twenty marks. In May 1374 he leased from the Corporation of London the dwelling-house over the gate of Aldgate. In June he was appointed Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidy of Wools, Skins, and tanned Hides in the Port of London, with the obligation to keep the records of his office with his own hand, and to be continually present. On the 13th of the same month John of Gaunt granted a pension of £10 to Chaucer and his wife for good services rendered by them 'to the said Duke, his Consort, and his mother the Queen.'² In 1375 two wardships were granted Chaucer, one of which, that of Edward Staplegate of Kent, subsequently brought him in £104. In 1376 the King made him a grant of £71 : 4 : 6, the price of some wool forfeited at the Customs for non-payment of duty; and just before Christmas he received ten marks as his wages, as one of the retinue of Sir John Burley, on some secret service. In 1377 he went to Flanders with Sir Thomas Percy on another secret mission, and later in the same year was engaged in France, probably with the King's ambassadors, who were then negotiating a peace.

Edward III.'s death on 21st June 1377 caused no interruption in Chaucer's prosperity. Early in the next year he probably took part in a second embassy to France, to negotiate a marriage between Richard II. (then twelve years old) and a daughter of the French king. In May 1378, again, we find him preparing to accompany Sir Edward Berkeley on a mission to Lombardy, there to treat on military matters with Bernabo Visconti, Lord of Milan, and with the English free-lance, Sir John Hawkwood. He obtained the usual letters of protection, and appointed two friends, Richard Forrester and the poet Gower, his agents during his absence. The arrears of his pension (£20), with an advance of two marks on the current quarter, were paid him, and on 28th May he received one hundred marks for his wages and expenses during his mission. Of the mission itself we know nothing, but we find Chaucer at home again on 3rd February 1379, when he drew his arrears of pension for the time he had been absent.

As far as we know, with this journey to Lombardy Chaucer's career as a diplomatist came to an end, and for the next five years or so we must picture him as attending to his duties as Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidies, receiving his

¹ For new (1900) evidence as to Thomas Chaucer see note to p. xix.

² A pension of the same amount had been granted by the Duke to Philippa Chaucer on 30th August 1372, and possibly the 1374 pension was only a re-grant of this to the husband and wife jointly.

own and his wife's pensions at irregular intervals, and probably dunning the Treasury for £22 due to him for his last French mission, until in March 1381 it was finally paid.¹ On three successive New Year's Days (1380-82) his wife was presented with a silver gilt cup and cover by the Duke of Lancaster, and in May 1382 Chaucer himself was appointed to an additional Comptrollership, that of the Petty Customs of the Port of London, with leave to exercise his office by deputy. In February 1385 the same privilege was allowed him in regard to his old Comptrollership, after he had been granted a month's leave of absence at the end of the previous year. In October 1386 he sat in the Parliament at Westminster as one of the Knights of the Shire for Kent, and on the 15th of the same month gave evidence in favour of Lord Scrope in the suit between him and Sir Robert Grosvenor as to the right to a certain coat of arms, which he swore that he had constantly seen Henry le Scrope bearing in the campaign before 'Retters' seven-and-twenty years previously. That campaign had ended for Chaucer himself in a short imprisonment, but since his ransom by Edward III. he had enjoyed, as far as we can tell, an uninterrupted career of prosperity, with a considerable income from his pension and official employments, and with his various diplomatic missions to increase his knowledge of the world.

To no small extent Chaucer's good fortune was due to the favour of his patron John of Gaunt, and now the latter had left England in the spring of 1386 to prosecute his claims to the throne of Castile. The Parliament in which Chaucer had sat had demanded a change in the royal advisers, and though the King at first resisted, the Duke of Gloucester was too strong for him. A Board of eleven was appointed to overlook the royal household and treasury, and Chaucer, who belonged to the King's party, lost both his Comptrollerships, his successors in them being nominated in December. Shortly before this he must have given up his house in Aldgate, for in October of this year it was let to another tenant, and we have no knowledge where the poet lived during the next thirteen years. Some time in the second half of 1387 it is probable that he lost his wife, for there is no record of any payment of her pension after midsummer in that year. By May 1388 he must have been in serious financial straits, for we find him assigning both his pensions (*i.e.* the original pension of twenty marks and the twenty marks allowed him instead of his pitcher of wine) to a certain John Scalby, who presumably gave him a lump sum in exchange for them. Exactly a year later (May 1389) the King dismissed Gloucester and the other Lords Appellant from his counsels, and declared his determination no longer to live under governance, and with the return of John of Gaunt to England Chaucer, no doubt, hoped for better times. A brief spell of prosperity came to him by his appointment on the 12th July 1389 to be Clerk of the King's Works at the Palace of Westminster, the Tower of London, and various royal manors, at a salary of two shillings a day, with power to employ a deputy. A year later he was ordered to procure workmen and materials for the repair of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and was paid the costs of putting up scaffolds in Smithfield for the King and Queen to see

¹ These years, otherwise apparently uneventful, were broken by one unpleasant incident, for on 1st May 1380 a certain Cecilia de Chaumpaigne executed an absolute release to Chaucer from all liability *de meo rapto*. Quite recently, Mr. Reginald R. Sharpe has printed in the *Athenaeum* for 14th August 1897 extracts from the Rolls of Pleas and Memoranda at the Guildhall, which show that on 26th June in the same year 1380 Cecilia Chaumpaigne executed a general release '*racione cuiuscunque cause a principio mundi*,' to Richard Goodchild 'coteler' and John Grove 'armurer,' and that on the same day Goodchild and Grove executed a similar release to Chaucer. On the 2nd of the next month Grove gave Cecilia Chaumpaigne a recognisance for £10 to be paid at Michaelmas, as was duly done. Mr. Sharpe suggests that the £10 may have been paid to the lady by Grove on Chaucer's account, but I do not agree as to this. Unfortunately the interpretation most favourable to the poet points to his having been accessory to some such attempt on Cecilia de Chaumpaigne as the Staces had practised against his own father.

the jousts in May. In the intervening March he had been named, with five others, as a commissioner for the repair of the roadways on the banks of the river between Greenwich and Woolwich, but by the summer of 1391 he had lost both his lucrative clerkships, though he received various payments in connection with them as late as 1393.

Even these short two years of renewed prosperity were marked by at least one unpleasant incident, for on 6th September 1390 Chaucer, by a strange misfortune, was robbed twice on the same day by members of the same gang of highwaymen—the first time at Westminster of £10, the second at Hatcham, near the ‘foul oak,’ of £9:3:8. The money was not his own, but the King’s, and was forgiven him by writ on 6th January 1391. One of the gang turned ‘approver’ or informer against the rest; but being challenged to a wager by battle and defeated, was himself hanged, a fate which seems eventually to have befallen most of his comrades.

After the loss of his clerkships Chaucer’s means of subsistence, so far as we have certain knowledge of them,¹ were reduced to the proceeds of his commissionership of the roadway between Greenwich and Woolwich. From one of these places, probably in 1393, he wrote to his friend Scogan, as one ‘at the stremē’s hede Of grace, of alle honour and of worthynesse’ (*i.e.* the Court at Windsor), a humorous poem which ended with the serious request ‘mynde thy frend ther it may fructifye,’ and it was possibly at Scogan’s request that Richard II. came to Chaucer’s relief with a grant of a new pension of £20 a year for life. During the next few years we find the poet frequently obtaining loans from the Treasury in advance of his pension, and on two occasions these loans are as small as 6s. 8d. (£5 modern value). In May 1398 he obtained from the King letters of protection against enemies suing him, and the protection was needed, for we know that just at this time he was being sued for a debt of a little over £14, nearly three-quarters of a year’s pension. In October of this year Richard granted him a tun of wine yearly in answer to a petition which seems to have begged it somewhat pitifully ‘for the sake of God and as a work of charity.’ A few months later the King himself was deposed. To Chaucer, however, as a follower of John of Gaunt, the change was only that from a good friend to a better, for a poem entitled a *Compleynt to his Purs*, addressed to Henry IV., elicited in October 1399 a fresh pension of forty marks in addition to the £20 granted by Richard II. Thus assisted, Chaucer, on 24th December, took a lease of a tenement in the garden of St. Mary’s Chapel, Westminster, for no less than fifty-three years. He drew an instalment of one pension on 21st February 1400, and £5 on account of another on 5th June, by the hands of a friend. On 25th October, just ten months after he had taken his long lease, he died, and was buried in St. Benet’s Chapel, in Westminster Abbey, where his grave has since been surrounded by those of many later poets.

The fact that Chaucer was a servant of the Crown, and the care with which the public records of this period have been preserved, enable us to trace the poet’s external or business life with a certainty and particularity in strong contrast with the little we know of the lives of most of the men of letters of the next two centuries. The additional information which we can glean from his poems is for the most part

¹ Between June 1390 and June 1391 a Geoffrey Chaucer was appointed Forester of North Petherton Park, in Somersetshire. The post was in the gift of the descendants of Chaucer’s first patroness, the Countess of Ulster, but even with this to help us, it is hardly safe to assume the identity of the forester and the poet. It is made more probable, however, by the fact that in 1416-17 a Thomas Chaucer was appointed to the same post. Since the discovery, in 1900, that a Thomas Chaucer also succeeded the poet in his tenement at Westminster, the tradition that Thomas was Geoffrey’s son is much strengthened, and the occurrence of both names at North Petherton is a further link.

vague and uncertain. The first of his works which we can date, the *Boke of the Duchesse* (an allegorical lament for the death of John of Gaunt's first wife, Blanche of Lancaster, who died in 1369), contains an allusion to an eight years' sickness which has caused much conjecture. Nature, he writes, will not suffer a man to live without sleep and in sorrow.

And I ne may, no nyght ne morwe,
 Slepe; and this melancolye
 And drede I have for to dye,
 Defaute of slepe and hevynesse,
 Hath sleyn my spirit of quyknesse
 That I have lost al lustihede.
 Suche fantasyes been in myn hede
 So I noot what is best to do.
 But men myghte axé me why so
 I may not slepe, and what me is?
 But nathéless, who aské this
 Leseth his asking trowely.
 My selven can not tellé why
 The sothe; but trowely, as I gesse,
 I holdé hit ben a siknesse
 That I have suffred this eight yere,
 And yet my booté is never the nere;
 For ther is phisicien but oon
 That may me hele; but that is doon.
 Passe we over until eft;
 That wil not be, moot nede be left.

It is usual to join with this passage *The Compleynte unto Pite*, or, as it is otherwise called, *The Exclamacion of the Deth of Pite*, a fine but rather artificial poem, in which Chaucer tells us how, when he ran to beg pity to avenge him on cruelty, 'I fond hir deed and buried in an herte.' If, however, we are to search for autobiography in Chaucer's love-poems, *A Compleynte to his Lady* (pp. 334-336), which is even more artificial than the *Pite*, contains some far more explicit phrases as to a hopeless love, and its ill effects in melancholy and loss of sleep. Part of this poem is in *terza rima*, and for this and other reasons it seems impossible to assign it to so early a date as 1369. If we separate these two poems from the passage in the *Boke of the Duchesse*, we are left without any clue to the meaning of the allusion to the eight years' 'sickness' and the one 'physician' who could heal it. It is possible that the 'sickness,' which seems to have been mysterious to Chaucer himself ('my-selven can not telle why'), may have been nothing more definite than the vague melancholy and unrest apt to beset young poets when they do not see their way clear, and in that case the physician may be the 'great physician,' God. It is possible also that the allusion is to a love unrequited, and perhaps unrequitable. It is idle to speculate. All we know is that any passion which Chaucer may have felt left but little trace on his verse, except possibly in the beauty and purity of the fine passage on the relations of lover and mistress in the *Boke of the Duchesse* itself. Save in this one piece Chaucer's contributions to English love-poetry may almost be called insignificant.

If we should be cautious in accepting any theory of an unrequited love upon too slender evidence, we should be no less careful to avoid the exaggeration which interprets the conventional satire which Chaucer in his later poems directs against

women as a proof that the poet's relations with his wife Philippa were unhappy. If read as the work of any other fourteenth century writer would be read, there is nothing in Chaucer's poetry on which to rest such a theory, and it is even possible to contend that if we compare the poems written during his wife's lifetime with those generally assigned to the period after its close, we have some ground for believing that her death removed a moral influence which had previously made itself felt. On the other hand, we are tempted to conjecture that it was the influence of the *ex-damoiselle* of the bed-chamber which kept Chaucer so long occupied with the fashionable artificial poetry of the day, and that this may have been one of the causes of his abnormally late poetic development.

To pass to matters of more certainty, we find in the *Boke of the Duchesse* an illustration from the side of his poetry of Chaucer's relation with John of Gaunt, while in the two prologues to the *Legende of Good Women* we see him intending to present his book to the Queen, to whose patronage of him we have no external allusions. Lastly, we may note the well-known passages in the *Ilous of Fame* (ii. 139-152) and *Legende of Good Women* (29-50), in which the poet alludes to his studious habits and love of flowers, and the remarks of the Host in the *Canterbury Tales* (B. 1884-1894) when he calls upon him for his story. These give us a picture of Chaucer as he imagined that other men would see him, and we have a notable additional help towards realising his appearance in the well-known portrait which his follower, Thomas Hoccleve, caused to be painted on one of the leaves of his own *Regement of Princes*, now Harleian MS. 4866 in the British Museum. Dr. Furnivall's description and comments on this portrait bring out its qualities so well that we cannot do better than quote them. 'The face,' he says, 'is wise and tender, full of a sweet and kindly sadness at first sight, but with much bonhomie in it on a further look, and with deep-set, far-looking grey eyes. Not the face of a very old man, a totterer, but of one with work in him yet, looking kindly, though seriously, out on the world before him. Unluckily the parted grey moustache and the vermilion above and below the lips render it difficult to catch the expression of the mouth; but the lips seem parted, as if to speak. Two tufts of white beard are on the chin; and a fringe of white hair shows from under the black hood. One feels one would like to go to such a man when one was in trouble, and hear his wise and tender speech.' Other portraits exist, but they are less carefully drawn. They serve, however, by their general resemblance to show us that the one which we owe to the piety of Hoccleve is no mere fancy sketch.

The foregoing account of Chaucer's career has been based entirely on authentic records, without any turning aside to notice the many fanciful statements about him, now known to be false. A full account of these will be found in the interesting chapter entitled 'the Chaucer Legend' in Professor T. R. Lounsbury's *Studies in Chaucer*,¹ to another chapter in which² students may be referred for an account of the books which we know, from his use of them in his works, that Chaucer must have read. That from our biographical sketch all mention of the poet's works has been so rigorously excluded is mainly due to the fact that, although the sequence of most of these is now well established, by evidence which I have epitomised in my *Chaucer Primer* (pp. 36-60), only in a few cases can we be absolutely sure of the year in which any given poem was begun or ended. In the case, indeed, of many of the poems we cannot even fix the date within five years, and it therefore

¹ Vol. i. pp. 129-224.

² Vol. ii. 169-426. A brief sketch of the same subject will be found in my *Chaucer Primer*, pp. 25-36. Professor Lounsbury seems to me a little unduly hard on Chaucer's inaccuracy as a scholar.

seemed impossible to introduce references to his poetry into an account of the poet's external life, of which most of the details we have are so singularly precise. The generalisation which has been accepted of recent years that Chaucer in the earliest stage of his career as a poet was subject only to the influences of French models, that he subsequently transferred his allegiance from Machault and Guillaume de Lorris to Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, and finally became his own master and developed an 'English' style all his own,—such a generalisation as this may pass muster well enough, but when we attempt to define the years within which these stages were accomplished difficulties spring up on every side.

The date 1369 as that of the composition of the *Boke of the Duchesse* is, if not really a landmark, at least solid ground, but one of the few questions of sequence still undecided is as to on which side of the *Boke of the Duchesse* we should place the translation of the *Romaunt of the Rose*, the *A B C*, and the *Pite*.

Again, it is usual to date Chaucer's 'Italian period' from his Genoa mission of 1372-1373, but if we except a few lines in the invocation before the legend of St. Cecilia, which have the appearance of being translated from Dante (they may be a later addition or derived from a common original), we have no real proof that Chaucer was possessed of any Italian books until his Milan mission of 1378-1379, or indeed that he could read Italian until this date.¹

Once more, though we have good reason for believing that the plan of the *Canterbury Tales* took shape about the years 1386-1388, we have no clue whatever to the number of years during which Chaucer continued writing them. The authenticity of the *Retraction* at the end of the *Tales* has been doubted, but with the distinct forecast of it given in the conclusion of the *Troilus*, the doubts seem themselves indefensible. It is possible that the unfinished treatise on the Astrolabe, compiled in 1391, practically marks the end of the *Tales*. It is possible, on the other hand, that the poet continued writing them almost to the last, though in this case, as he would hardly have abstained from publication during so many years, it is probable that we should have had a distinct group of manuscripts, containing only a portion of the extant series, put into circulation before the rest were written. But questions of this kind are never likely to be settled, and they are alluded to here chiefly to show how impossible it is to bring the two sides of Chaucer's life into as close connection as we could wish.

When we turn from the attempt to fix the precise date of the beginning or completion of any given poem to trace the development of Chaucer's genius our task becomes much easier. At first sight, indeed, it may seem that here we are merely arguing in a circle, deducing results from an arrangement especially contrived to produce them. But the sequence of Chaucer's poems, though in the early days of the Chaucer Society it was mapped out largely by this very test of development, has since been confirmed by a variety of other tests, and is strongly supported by every approximation to a precise date which we have attained. Thus Chaucer's gradual growth in poetic freedom and power is a real fact, and, as a fact, is worth studying. And at the outset we may note the strong probability that he started as a poet comparatively late in life. He himself went to school before the fashion of construing Latin into French and not into English had been abandoned, and it is probable that in the early years of his service at Court poetry in English would still

¹ The story of Griselda, which is generally and rightly regarded as written soon after the first Italian mission, was translated, not from the vernacular version of Boccaccio, but from the Latin of Petrarch. The sections, again, of the *Monk's Tale*, which are usually regarded as early, are taken from a Latin, not an Italian, work, the *De Casibus Virorum et Mulierum Illustrum* of Boccaccio.

have been rather looked down on, as a little vulgar or, at least, unfashionable. Certainly when Chaucer did begin to write, whether it was with his translation of the *Roman de la Rose*, or with the lost *Boke of the Leoun* (almost certainly a translation of Guillaume Machault's *Dit du Lion*),¹ or with the *A B C* translated from Guillaume de Deguilleville, or with the *Boke of the Duchesse*, in which, in addition to some (not very important) direct borrowings from Machault and the *Roman de la Rose*, the form of the whole poem is French,—whichever of these works we may choose to regard as the earliest, there can be no doubt that Chaucer was at starting wholly under the French influences which we may presume to have been predominant at Court, and which indeed were the only ones then open to him. From the three (or should we say the *two*?) extant works we see that even in these days of his apprenticeship Chaucer's verse is full of music, but that he will condescend to very poor padding when he is translating and has to fill out his stanza. In the *Boke of the Duchesse* he is throughout conventional, even his often praised portrait of the knight's lady lacking the individuality which in later years he would have given it with far fewer touches and less piling up of pretty adjectives. Yet with all its conventions the *Boke of the Duchesse* has a certain charm in it, quite different from anything in Chaucer's later work. He writes as the timid lover, who dreams of women afar off; and it is noticeable how in the three next poems which we may attribute to him, the *Lyf of Seint Cecyle*, the story of Griselde and the story of the Emperor's daughter Constance (see below, Introduction to *Canterbury Tales*), he, in each case, takes as his heroines personified virtues whom he certainly never realised to himself as living women. All these poems, it should be noted again, are more or less didactic and religious, though the religious feeling in them is eminently artificial. All three in their present form (more especially the story of Constance, now the *Man of Lawes Tale*) show marks of revision at a later date. But the adoption of the decasyllabic seven-line stanza instead of the octosyllabic couplet, and the breaking away from French influences to a more straightforward method of narration, must have marked them from the beginning.

It was impossible for Chaucer to remain long content with these graceful and tender, but very unreal, personifications of religious zeal, patience, and constancy. Between 1369 and 1379 was, if not the busiest, certainly the most adventurous decade of his life, the period when he was moving about and seeing much of men and things, and also becoming acquainted with a new world of literature. The second and third of the three poems we have mentioned show that he had already learnt his art, was no longer a servile translator, unhappy how to fill out a verse when his original failed him. By this time he was ready to improve on the author he followed, introducing touches of his own, some of which show the first traces of his sly humour,

¹ This lost work is mentioned in the *Retraction*, already alluded to, found in many manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*. Other lost works are *Origenes upon the Maudeleyn*, i.e. a translation of the homily on St. Mary Magdalene, falsely attributed to Origen, and the *Wretched Engendring of Mankynde*, a translation of Innocent III.'s treatise *De Miseria Conditionis humane*. Both these are mentioned in the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women*, though the latter only in the earlier draft. This list (*Legende*, ll. 411-430), with that in the *Retraction*, and a passage in the Prologue to the *Man of Lawes Tale* (B, 57-89), mentions all Chaucer's more important works. Others are vouched for by Lydgate, or have been preserved in the writing of Chaucer's younger contemporary John Shirley (r366?-1456), or are ascribed to the poet in good manuscripts. A severely tabular statement of the evidence for the authenticity of each poem will be found in my *Chaucer Primer* (chapter iii.), where also I have epitomised (appendix, § 85) the evidence in which various poems at one time commonly attributed to Chaucer are now known not to be by him. For a fuller discussion of these supposititious pieces, see Lounsbury's *Studies in Chaucer* (vol. i.) and more especially Professor Skeat's valuable supplement to his six-volume edition of Chaucer, entitled *Chaucerian and other Pieces* (Clarendon Press, 1897).

and strengthening the web of his poetry with thoughts and reflections culled wherever he could find them. His prose translation of Boethius and his study of Dante now came to help this reflective vein, and on the other hand he had made acquaintance with two of Boccaccio's masterpieces, not the *Decamerone*, which it is probable he never knew, but the *Teseide* and the *Filostrato*. The story of Palamon and Arcite, which, after at least one recasting, has come down to us as the *Knights Tale*, represents his work on the *Teseide*, and *Troilus and Criseyde* that on the *Filostrato*, and these two splendid poems, full of all the colour of mediæval chivalry and love and thought, relieved ever and anon with subtle touches of humour, are the striking achievements of his middle period. In the *Parlement of Foules*, written in 1382, he returns, to please the Court, to the French models of his earlier days, only to show how far he had progressed since the *Boke of the Duchesse* of thirteen years earlier. In the *Hous of Fame* he is much less happy. I think there can be no doubt that Dr. Heath is right in his conjecture (see his Introduction to the poem) that Books i. and ii. were separated from Book iii. by some interval, but the poem raises many difficulties, some of which we are not likely ever to solve. Perhaps it is not amiss to remark here that Chaucer, though one of the world's great story-tellers, is not remarkable for inventiveness. Probably all, or nearly all, of his plots are borrowed, and in the fourteenth century books from which he could borrow were not easily come at. He had brought back the *Teseide* and *Filostrato* from one of his visits to Italy, and perhaps had strained his purse to do it: but when he had used them he was thrown back on the rather jejune material he could find in the books around him. At an earlier period he had probably been driven by some such straits to compile the dreary tragedies of misfortune which we know as the *Monkes Tale*. In the first two Books of the *Hous of Fame* we find him narrating or alluding to almost all the tragedies of hapless love which he soon set himself to tell, till he wearied of them, in the *Legende of Good Women*. The third Book of the *Fame* is in quite a different style, cast in Chaucer's happy discursive vein, and only failing for lack of a climax. In the *Legende* it is the Prologue, in its two drafts, which gives him his opportunity. Of the nine stories of loving women which he had patience to complete, only the first three (those of Cleopatra, Thisbe, and Dido) are in any way worthy of him.

The *Legende of Good Women* was no doubt abandoned from sheer weariness with its monotonous theme, and it was perhaps Chaucer's sense that this monotony must be avoided at all costs that caused him to conceive the plan of the *Canterbury Tales*, of which diversity, the exchange of stories between gentle and simple, bookmen and the bookless, the religious and the irreligious, is the very essence. Once more the scheme was left unfinished, but in this case there is little to regret. If indeed Chaucer had been in the mood, he might have described the adventures of the pilgrims at Canterbury, and the final supper at the Taberd on their return to Southwark, with all the richness of humour which marks the General Prologue or that of the Wife of Bath. But there is some gain in being left with the picture of the pilgrims as still journeying along the Kentish roads, and as for the *Tales*, they run the whole length of the gamut, and seem to leave no note wanting. As is generally agreed, some of the tales of the gentle folk had probably been written at earlier dates, and had now only to be revised and fitted into their places, but his scheme gave Chaucer an excuse for displaying the same mastery in the broad humours of narration as he had shown in his *Troilus* and *Knights Tale* in the fields of romance. It is too true that several of these tales must be reckoned among those which, as the *Retraction* phrases it, 'sounen into sin,' but it is as unfair to take them too seriously as it would be to expose the essential immorality of most fairy-tales, and there can be no question as to the extraordinary

skill with which the tales of the Miller, Reeve, and Summoner, no less than the gentler humours of that of the Nun's Priest, are set forth.

Along with their many masterpieces of humour and romance, the *Canterbury Tales* contain some poorer stories, the very feeble version of the death of Virginia, for instance, and the Manciple's tale of Phcebus and the Crow, and it is not easy to tell whether these represent earlier work foisted into the cycle, or whether we have here the fruits of Chaucer's failing powers. It needs some acquaintance with the workings of the mediæval mind to imagine how, at any period of his career, he could have cared to set forth the weariful prose discourses of Dame Prudence. The Parson's sermon, long as it is, is much more endurable, and though nobody is likely, except for professional reasons, to read it through, as I have done, at least six times, the task is not so repellent as might be imagined. The prose treatise on the Astrolabe, written for little Lewis Chaucer in 1391, though only a tenth of its length, is much more formidable. But in all his prose work Chaucer is merely as any other fourteenth century writer, without a touch of the grace and humour with which his poems are filled. As a poet he needs to-day no one to praise him. He has been praised already, wisely and well, by many clever writers. All that is now needed is that the praise shall no longer be taken contentedly on trust, but that his poems, which in their freshness and restfulness must in this century have more power of pleasure-giving than ever before, should be allowed to speak for themselves to ears no longer deaf.

THE CANTERBURY TALES

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

The *Canterbury Tales* are given the place of honour in this edition partly out of deference to a time-honoured precedent, which might fairly claim some weight even against the chronological arrangement which commends itself to modern scholarship, but partly also because their assignment to any other position would be misleading. In addition to two long treatises in prose they contain some 18,000 lines of verse, and it is quite certain that not all of these 18,000 lines sprang from Chaucer's brain after he had conceived the plan which was to link together this wonderful medley. That one, at least, of the tales was written at an earlier period of his career we have clear evidence. In the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women* we find the *Second Nun's Tale* already alluded to as the *Lyf of Seint Cecyle*, and in its introduction the narrator is made to speak as an 'unworthy sone of Eve' (l. 60) instead of as a woman, and to address those 'that reden that I write' (l. 78) instead of the listeners to a tale told along the highway to Canterbury. Again, with our suspicions thus aroused, we note Chaucer's distinct statement that he learnt the story of Grisilde at Padua of 'Fraunceys Petrark,' who died in 1374, and whom the English poet may have met on his Genoa mission of 1373, when Petrarch was living at Arqua, near Padua. Chaucer was not so well off for subjects for it to be probable that if he learnt this story from Petrarch in 1373 he would have left it unused for a dozen years or more, and there is a general agreement in the belief that he wrote his English version of Petrarch's Latin shortly after his return to England. In the *Monk's Tale*, again, the wearisome tragedies fall into two distinct groups, one of twelve stories of old time, derived from the Bible, Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum et Feminarum Illustrium* and *De Claris Mulieribus*, and the *Roman de la Rose*; the

other, of five modern instances, mostly very briefly treated, and one of them recording the death of Bernabo Visconti, Lord of Milan, which occurred as late as 1385. One of the modern stories, that of Ugolino of Pisa, is partly taken from Dante, and is strikingly better than all the rest. In the early stories, though the verse is good enough, the treatment is often careless and unsympathetic, and Chaucer was clearly not interested in them. It cannot be said dogmatically that they show early work, but it seems probable that at some time towards the close of the decade 1369-1379 (to which, it must be remembered, there is strikingly little of his poetry which can be positively assigned) Chaucer began a poem on the same plan as that afterwards adopted by his follower Lydgate in his *Falls of Princes*, and then abandoned it till the need came to suit the Monk with an unexpected but appropriate theme, when it was revised and enlarged. The *Man of Lawes Tale*, once more a curiously inappropriate one, is cast in the same seven-line stanza as the *Seint Cecyle* and the *Griseilde*, and from its subject, style, and tone appears to have been written towards the close of the same period. On the other hand, the *Prioress's Tale* of the little chorister, though it goes back in feeling to this earlier period, is clearly written after the conception of the plan of the *Canterbury Tales*, as is proved by the 'quod she' with which the narration is interrupted (B 1644), while its ripe and mature beauty fully agrees with this evidence.

Whether any of the other *Tales*—all of which, except the Sir Thopas parody, are written in heroic couplets—should be assigned to a date earlier than the immortal General Prologue, is a point much more difficult to determine. Outside the *Canterbury Tales* the only extant poem in which Chaucer used the heroic couplet is the *Legende of Good Women*, and as this certainly preceded the *Canterbury Tales* as a whole, there is a general inclination to regard this as Chaucer's first essay in the couplet, rather than to give any individual Tale precedence over it. On the other hand, there is an allusion in the already oft-quoted list of Chaucer's works in the *Legende* to a poem enshrining

Al the love of Palamon and Arcyte
Of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte.

It is difficult to believe that the reference here is to the fragment of *Queen Anelida and Fals Arcyte* which has come down to us, as it ought to point to a poem which kept much more closely to the loves of the two knights as narrated in the *Teseide*. Our natural inclination would therefore be to identify this poem with the *Knights Tale*, as we now have it, but the ingenuity of Chaucer's commentators has discovered that there are ten seven-line stanzas translated from the *Teseide* in *Anelida and Arcyte*, sixteen in the *Parlement of Foules*, and three in *Troilus and Criseyde*. Hence has arisen a theory that in addition to the *Anelida* and the *Knights Tale* Chaucer composed a more literal translation of the *Teseide* in seven-line stanzas, subsequently withdrew it from circulation, and used some of his old material in later poems. Ingenious as this theory is, the supposition of the writing and suppression of a poem, necessarily of considerable length, is no light matter, and if Chaucer really wrote such a poem and subsequently used fragments of it in other works it is extraordinary that he should have called attention to a tale thus cruelly treated by an entirely gratuitous reference in the *Legende*. As for the fragments of the *Teseide* found in the three seven-line poems, there is a parallel instance, of the nearly simultaneous use of the same material in two different metres, in the story of Dido and Æneas, which we find first in the octosyllabic couplets of the *House of Fame*, and again in the decasyllabic couplets of the *Legende of Good Women*. On the whole,

and with all deference to the great authority of the scholars who have held the opposite view, it seems best to regard the theory of a lost seven-line version of *Palamon and Arcyte* as a needless hypothesis. If this be so, the reference in the *Legend* must be almost certainly to the *Knights Tale*, and this fine poem is thus brought back nearer to the period of the *Troilus*, with which it is so closely allied in style and temper.

If the *Knights Tale* is thus brought back, other Tales, notably those of the Franklin (one of Chaucer's great successes) and the Squire, may perhaps come with it, and we need not hesitate, on the score of their metre, to relegate such poor work as the story of Appius and Virginia as told by the Doctor of Phisik, and the Manciple's tale of Apollo and the Crow, to a less happy period of Chaucer's career than that in which he was writing the Prologue and others of his finest works. Without wishing to press this point too far, it seems fair to point out that there is nothing unreasonable in supposing that when Chaucer conceived his immensely ambitious scheme of the *Canterbury Tales* he had a really considerable amount of material already at his disposal. It is sufficient, however, here to emphasise the fact that inclusion in the *Canterbury* series of itself tells us absolutely nothing as to the date at which any given poem was written, and that we must therefore place the *Tales* as a whole entirely outside the chronological sequence of the poet's other works.

As regards the date at which the idea took shape of a *Canterbury Pilgrimage* as a framework by which to connect a number of otherwise distinct stories, we have only two or three years from which to choose, and we must not attempt to pin it down too precisely to any one of them. We have various good reasons for believing that the six years which succeeded 1379 produced the *Boece*, *Troilus*, *Parlement of Foules*, *Hous of Fame* and *Legende of Good Women*, and it is therefore inconceivable that Chaucer should have planned the *Canterbury Tales* earlier than the end of 1385 or beginning of 1386. Again, no one who has read the talks by the way can doubt that the poet himself had travelled over the ground, while we know that until on 17th February 1385 he was permitted to appoint a deputy in his Comptrollership he was closely tied to his official work, a bondage of which he complains bitterly in the *Hous of Fame*. Chaucer's own pilgrimage, then, may have been made in 1385 or in any subsequent year, but hardly before this. On the other hand, the short poems written towards the close of his life show that the not very advanced age to which he attained pressed heavily on him, and it would be unreasonable to assign the plan of the *Tales* to his last decade. If, as is highly probable, the *Legende* was begun in 1385 and soon afterwards left unfinished in despair, everything points to the scheme of the *Canterbury Tales* as taking form during the next two or three years, 1386-1388. Nearer than this it is not easy to go with safety, for in drawing conclusions from the indications of date which we find in the talks by the road we must remember that Chaucer may have fitted them in either to the year in which he was writing, or back to the year in which he himself took his holiday. In the latter case the dates would be more likely to be real dates, while if we prefer to believe that they are taken from the year in which he was writing, we can hardly imagine that Chaucer was likely to trouble himself to consider too curiously whether this or that week would be a convenient one for some of his imaginary characters to make their pilgrimage. Thus, in drawing conclusions from the mention of 18th April in the talk which precedes the *Man of Law's Tale* (B 5), I do not think we can absolutely rule out of court the year 1386, on the ground that in that year 18th April fell in Holy Week, 'when the Parson and others would be much in

request for the duties which the season imposed on them,¹ or reject 1388 because 19th April then fell on a Sunday, and 'if Sunday travelling had been intended, something would have been said about the hearing of mass.'¹ With this caution, however, I am quite prepared to accept Professor Skeat's assurance that in 1387 'everything comes right,' since the pilgrims could assemble at the Tabard on Tuesday, 16th April, with four clear days before them, and the journey ending conveniently on a Saturday. Whether we should assign this year to that of Chaucer's own pilgrimage, or to that of his imaginary pilgrims, must remain undetermined. In any case we cannot be wrong in believing that in or about 1387 is the most probable date for the *Canterbury Tales* to have been begun. As to whence the idea of this particular framework for story-telling came to the poet, 'out of his own head' seems in every way the best answer. Certainly there is no shred of evidence to prove that he copied it from the very inferior scheme of Boccaccio's *Decamerone*.

The fame of Becket's shrine, the popularity of the pilgrimage to it, and the mediaeval habit of turning a pilgrimage into a kind of religious holiday, are all matters of such common knowledge that they do not need illustrating here. Nor need we stop to prove the futility of the idea once current, that the pilgrims were in so great a hurry to bring their holiday to an end as to have accomplished the then well-nigh impossible feat of travelling fifty-six miles over heavy roads in a single day. In 1358 the queen-mother Isabella, on her own pilgrimage, left London 7th June, slept that night at Dartford, slept at Rochester on the 8th, and at Ospringe on the 9th, and reached Canterbury the next day. Two years later John of France slept at Dartford 1st July, dined there next day, slept at Rochester on the 2nd, dined at Sittingbourne and slept at Ospringe on the 3rd, and reached Canterbury 4th July. The records of other fourteenth century journeys confirm the presumption that Dartford, Rochester, and Ospringe (where some traces of the old Pilgrim's House still exists) were the regular sleeping-places on the road, and there can be no doubt that Chaucer intended his pilgrims to make the journey by these stages, and to take four days over it.

As to the exact route they followed some little uncertainty prevails, owing to the line of the modern road not coinciding everywhere with that of the old 'pilgrim's way,' but we have references to Deptford and Greenwich in the talk before the *Reeve's Tale* (A 3906, 3907), to Rochester in the Host's address to the Monk (B 3116), to Sittingbourne in the quarrel between the Friar and the Summoner (D 847), and to Boughton-under-Blee in the *Canon's Yeoman's Prologue* (G 556), and to the still mysterious Bobbe-up-and-down, 'under the Blee,' in the *Manciple's* (H 2). Rochester could not possibly be reached after Sittingbourne, and guided by this fact Henry Bradshaw and Dr. Furnivall were able to correct a mistake in arrangement, found even in the best MSS., by which the five Tales of the Shipman, Prioress, Chaucer, the Monk, and the Nun's Priest (all linked together by the talks on the road) were placed immediately before that of the Second Nun, instead of between that of the Man of Law (with which the tales of the second day were begun) and that of the Wife of Bath, in which Sittingbourne is mentioned. By a less necessary alteration the position of the Tales of the Doctor and Pardoner, which in the best manuscripts come before the Shipman's group, were brought back along with it, but placed after instead of before. There are no references to place or time in these two tales, so that the alteration matters little either way, and we now have the twenty-four extant tales and fragments in a reasonable and probable order. Some of these tales (as has been mentioned in the case of the Shipman's group) are linked together by references, backwards or forwards, in the talks on the road; in other cases there is no link of any kind between

¹ Skeat's *Chaucer*, vol. iii. p. 373.

one tale and the next, Chaucer having left the intermediate talk to be filled in when he had written more of the sixty (or a hundred and twenty !) stories which he at one time contemplated. In this and other editions, since the Chaucer Society issued its great Six-Text edition of the best manuscripts, each group of tales is now marked by a letter of the alphabet (A-I), the line-numeration being consecutive throughout the tales of the group.

The mention of the Six-Text edition, which has been the foundation of all subsequent Chaucer work, must lead to a brief statement as to the manuscripts followed, and the method of quoting them, in this text. The extant manuscripts of the *Tales* are very numerous, but there have here been used only the seven printed by the Chaucer Society, viz. the Ellesmere (E), Cambridge University MS. Gg 4. 27 (Cam.), the Hengwrt MS. 154 (Heng.), the Corpus Christi College, Oxford MS. (Corp.), the Petworth (Pet.), and the Lansdowne MS. 851 (Lansd.), being the Society's Six-Texts, and the very important Harleian MS. 7334 (H), which it subsequently printed. As regards the Harleian MS., there is an interesting footnote in Prothero's *Life of Henry Bradshaw* (p. 225) stating, on the authority of Mr. Aldis Wright, that one of Bradshaw's reasons for stopping short in his project of editing Chaucer 'was his inability to account for the wide divergences which distinguish the Harleian MS. of the *Canterbury Tales* from all the other manuscripts.' Thus the Harleian has much to answer for, and there can be no doubt, also, that its readings are often extraordinarily careless, and even absurd. On the other hand, it has a number of readings (cp. A 74, 257, 363, 415, 559, 727, 782, 791, 799, 803, *smyteth off myn heed for I wol yeve you myn heed* in l. 782 being a notable instance) as good or better than those found in any other manuscript, and many of them of a kind which it is very improbable that a copyist would have introduced in transcription. The most probable explanation seems to be that many of these readings represent Chaucer's own 'second thoughts,' introduced into a manuscript which passed through his hand after the *Tales* were already in circulation, and that the Harleian MS. is a careless copy of this manuscript.

At the extreme opposite pole to the Harleian stands the Ellesmere, a most carefully written MS., well spelt and observant of grammatical forms, with readings always straightforward and intelligible. Its discovery by the workers of the Chaucer Society was, perhaps, their greatest achievement.

Between the Ellesmere and the Harleian stand the other five manuscripts, of which the Cambridge and the Hengwrt are both very closely akin to the Ellesmere, while the Lansdowne, Corpus, and Petworth approach, more and more nearly, to the Harleian in their general characteristics, though they seldom agree with it in its most important variants. In all these five manuscripts the process of 'contamination,' i.e. the correction or completion of a manuscript of one group by one of another, has been at work, e.g. in the *Doctor's Tale* the Cambridge MS. deserts the Ellesmere and Hengwrt to join the Harleian and the other three in a number of readings, a few of which are possible, while many are absurd. But on the whole the relations of manuscript and manuscript are fairly constant. The text of the present edition is based on E, mere clerical errors avoided by the other MSS. being silently corrected, while variants of literary or metrical interest are recorded in the notes, or very sparingly introduced into the text. In recording variants E and H are regarded as mutually exclusive, so that if the reading in the note is assigned to H, that in the text is from E, and *vice versa*. To show further the amount of support accorded to any rejected reading of E or H, an index number is added to the letter. Thus a reading followed by the letter E denotes that the text follows the other six manuscripts, and the variation is supported by the Ellesmere only. E² shows that it is supported by the Ellesmere and one other,

almost certainly the Cambridge; F³ that it is supported by Ellesmere and two others, almost certainly Cambridge and Hengwrt. The numbers 4-6 show the additional support of one, two, or three of the inferior manuscripts, Corpus, Petworth, and Lansdowne. Similarly, a variant followed by the letter H denotes that the text has the support of the Ellesmere and other five manuscripts. H² indicates the agreement of one other manuscript, probably the Petworth, with H; H³, H⁴ the support of one or two more, almost certainly Corpus and Lansdowne; H⁵ that these are again reinforced, probably by Hengwrt; H⁶ that even the Cambridge deserts the Ellesmere. I do not claim for this system of abridged collation that it is entirely satisfactory, but it gives a rough view of the authorities on either side at a glance, and makes it possible to record variants which otherwise would have to be omitted.

As regards spelling, the modern usage as regards *i* and *j*, *u* and *v*, has been followed throughout. I have also to confess that a personal dislike to the forms *hise*, *evere*, and *nevere* has led me to alter them throughout to *his*, *ever*, and *never*, though Professor McCormick has since convinced me that Chaucer probably pronounced the two latter words as *ev're* and *nev're*. A few accidental misspellings have been altered here and there; otherwise the excellent spelling of the Ellesmere manuscript has been carefully followed.

For full information as to the sources from which Chaucer drew his stories, students interested in such questions will naturally refer to the *Originals and Analogues* printed by the Chaucer Society, or to the treatment of the subject by Professor Skeat in vol. iii. of the *Oxford Chaucer*, where all the information gleaned by the Chaucer Society, together with the results of the Editor's own researches, will be found set forth. In this edition, to save referring back, the briefest possible indication of the sources, where known, of each Tale has been prefixed to it by way of a preliminary note, and not much need here be added. As we have remarked before, inventiveness in the matter of plots was not a striking feature in Chaucer's equipment as a poet, but given the barest outline of a story he could develop it in his own inimitable manner, and his power in this respect seems to have steadily increased. Thus his indebtedness takes every form from the almost servile translation in the *Lyf of Seint Cecyle* to the re-telling in his own fashion of a tale like that of the *Canon's Yeoman* which he may have heard in the streets. For about one-third of the *Tales* no 'original' properly so called is known to exist, but from the far East or from France, Italy or Germany stories with similar plots have been unearthed which show that the idea was already in existence and only waited for Chaucer to develop it. This is the case with the tales of *The Miller*, *The Reeve*, *The Shipman*, *The Prioress*, *The Nun's Priest*, *The Pardoner*, *The Wife of Bath*, *The Friar*, *The Summoner* and *the Merchant*. The fable, or apologue or fabliau which can now be produced may be more or less close to the story as Chaucer tells it, but the literary setting is entirely his own, and in no case is there any need to suppose that he had a written original before him as he wrote. If he had once been told the story (as Tennyson, to take a modern instance, was told that of *Enoch Arden*) he would have obtained all the help he needed. In the case of the dull tale of the *Manciple* Chaucer doubtless followed the version of Ovid (*Metamorphoses* ii. 534-632), in that of the Doctor he professes to take Livy's account of the death of Virginia, but really borrowed from the *Roman de la Rose* (ll. 5613-5682). For the story of Dorigen, which he assigns to the *Franklin*, he distinctly mentions his obligation to a Breton 'lay' (F 709-715) and adduces as his authority for the length of Arviragus's absence the fact that 'the book seith thus' (l. 813). Unluckily no such 'lay' can now be found, though Mr. Clouston has discovered several Eastern analogues, from which not only Chaucer's

story, but the similar one (with quite different incidents) told by Boccaccio (*Decam.* x. 5), must be sprung. The loss of the original in this case is regrettable, as it would have been curious to have noted how much of a story so well told was borrowed. Unfortunately there can be no doubt that the one blot in the telling, the unmercifully long recital of the martyrs of chastity drawn from S. Jerome 'contra Jovinianum,' is of Chaucer's own introduction. The original of *The Squire's Tale* has in the same way defied detection, though its sources are plainly Eastern. Even the attempt to prove direct indebtedness to the *Travels of Marco Polo* is something less than convincing. From the fact that the tale is unfinished it seems not unreasonable to believe that Chaucer borrowed only the materials of this story and broke down for lack of a plot ready furnished to him. Of the poet's own *Tale of Sir Thopas*, so rudely interrupted by the Host, the 'original' is to be looked for in the numerous metrical romances which he here parodied so delightfully, and many of the passages which he selected to satirise have been duly pointed out by Dr. E. Kölbing (*Englische Studien*, xi.).

There remain seven tales derived wholly or in part from literary originals still extant. Chaucer's prose story of Prudence and Melibee is derived from Jean de Meung's adaptation of the *Liber Consolationis et Consilii* of Albertano of Brescia, a jurist who flourished in the first half of the thirteenth century. The *Parson's Tale* is similarly derived, but with alterations and additions, from the *Somme des Vices et des Vertus* of Frère Lourens, who died in 1279, a recent German theory that it was tampered with, after Chaucer's death, or with his consent, by some orthodox priest, being quite unnecessary. I cannot, however, agree with Professor Skeat that this Tale 'was once an independent Treatise, which people could either "herkne or rede," and was probably written before 1380, at much the same time as the *Tale of Melibee*, which it somewhat resembles in style.' The words 'herkne or rede' occur, not in the Tale itself, but in *Envoy* or *Retraction*, and I see no reason to doubt that this was really the work of Chaucer's old age. When the *Melibee* was translated is nearly as difficult to imagine as why it was ever translated at all.

At the outset of this introduction to the *Canterbury Tales* the sources of the Tales of the Second Nun (*Lyf of Seint Cecyle*), Clerk and Monk have already been indicated. The Man of Lawes story of Constance is derived from the Anglo-French chronicle of Nicholas Trivet, an English Dominican of the first half of the fourteenth century; the Knight's Tale from Boccaccio's *Teseide*, and in the *Eversley Edition* of the *Tales* I have already pointed out with some minuteness how the four Tales of the Nun, Clerk, Lawyer, and Knight illustrate the increasing freedom with which Chaucer handled his material as he felt his mastery in his art increase. In the Second Nun's Tale he is at first servile, but at last begins to condense from sheer weariness and even adds a touch here and there. In the Clerk's, with a better original, he translates with much greater ease, and shows some healthy symptoms of rebellion at the severity alike of Grisilde's trials and her patience. In the story of Constance he is no longer a translator but an adapter, introducing as poetic ornament moral reflections from the *De Contemptu Mundi*, astrological lore from a variety of authors, and, best of all, some very fine speeches and descriptions out of his own head. Lastly in the Knight's Tale we find him improving on the *Teseide* at every turn. It is he who allows Palamon to see Emily first and so have the better claim to her; it is to him we owe the fierce quarrel in prison, the vision of Mercury that sends Arcyte back to Athens, the overheard soliloquy in the wood, and the outburst of anger when Theseus discovers the prison-breakers. When he wrote this story of *Palamon and Arcyte* Chaucer had no longer anything to learn from others, and

thenceforth he might take his plots where he could find them with as good a right as that of Shakespeare to such treasure trove.

MINOR POEMS

(H. FRANK HEATH)

A text of Chaucer's Minor Poems which shall be even fairly satisfactory is no easy achievement. There is scarcely one of his shorter works which does not offer serious difficulties to the editor. In some cases the poem is found in only one MS. (e.g. *To Rosemounde*); in some, though there may be two or three authorities, they are copied one from the other (e.g. *A Complaynt to his Lady*); in others, though there may be many MSS. extant, they show so much mutual contamination that it is impossible to construct a complete genealogy, and sometimes very difficult to assign some of these authorities to any one group (e.g. the *Parlement of Foules*). In all cases the MSS. are much later in date than an editor would desire, and are far removed from the original or originals. A critical study leads one to feel sure that Chaucer was often responsible for more than one draft of the same poem, and took little or no pains to maintain verbal identity. There is also little doubt that he not infrequently made corrections in later copies of his works which may have fallen in his way. Neither of these practices lightens the labours of a conscientious editor. One example must suffice here. There can be no reasonable doubt that the group of MSS. which read 'lyke' (l. 5), 'amonge us' (l. 10), 'man' (l. 17), and 'wed' (l. 28) in the Balade *Lak of Stedfastnesse* must be traced to a different original from the group to which MS. Harl. 7333 belongs, and which I have followed in this edition.

It is impossible within the limits of this volume to give all the apparatus necessary for a full critical edition, but the text here printed is the result of a careful collation and critical investigation of all the MSS. printed in the Chaucer Society's publications, and of the MSS. in the British Museum, in all cases where it was advisable or necessary to consult them.

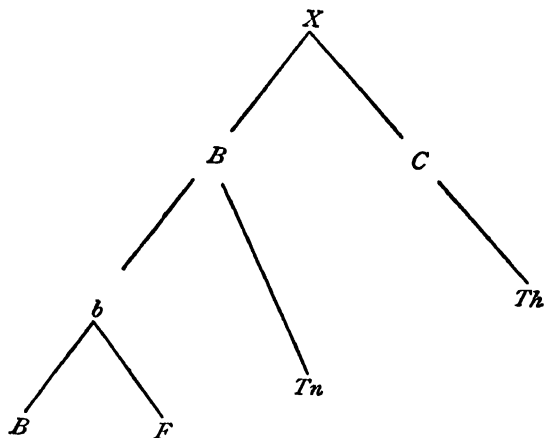
As regards the spelling here adopted, in addition to abandoning the mediæval use of *u* for *v*, and *i* (or *j*) for *j*, and the casual use of capitals in the MSS., I have adopted the modern spelling of the pronouns *thou*, *you*, *your*, *our*, etc. With these concessions to modern practice, the spelling of the text has been assimilated so far as possible to that of the Ellesmere MS. I have been rather more consistent, perhaps, than the fifteenth century scribe of the Ellesmere, particularly where grammatical forms were in question (e.g. in the distinction of the preterite and past participle, *haddē*, *had*; *broghte*, *broght*, etc.); but Chaucer must also have been more particular in these matters, and, be that as it may, the distinction certainly has the advantage of making the construction of the sentence and frequently the run of the verse clearer to the modern reader.

THE DETHE OF THE DUCHESSE

This poem was written soon after 1369, in which year John of Gaunt's first wife, Blanche of Lancaster, died at the age of twenty-nine, her husband being then of the same age. The poem is clearly the work of a young poet, for, though it strikes a

true note of pathos at the close, it is unduly long in approaching the climax, and it has no touch of the characteristic humour and irony which so constantly relieve Chaucer's later work, even when the theme is a romantic one. Nor is the form marked by any originality. It is a dream-poem of the typical discursive order, for which the *Roman de la Rose* was responsible throughout European literature of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with the usual furniture and scenery of twittering birds, the hunt, and the May morning. It has indeed been claimed altogether for France by Taine, who heartily despised English literature prior to Shakespeare as 'mere servile imitation.' But the *Deuthe of the Duchesse*, though it has recollections in it of both the *Roman de la Rose* and the *Remède de Fortune*, is not a translation or imitation of either. The incident of 'Seys' with which it opens is taken from the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, in which the story of Alcione's appearance to his faithful wife Ceyx is told, and Machault (possibly to Chaucer's knowledge) imitated the same passage in his *Dit de la Fontaine Amoureuse*, but beyond this the matter of the English poem is original.

Of the three MSS. Fairfax 16 is certainly the best, and closely related to it the Bodley MS. My own independent investigation of the MSS. gave the same result as those of Koch¹ and Max Lange,² and I therefore reproduce the following genealogy with the more confidence :—



B = Bodley MS. 638 (Bodleian Library).

F = Fairfax MS. 16 " "

Tn. = Tanner MS. 346 " "

Th. = Thynne's Edition (1532).

The conservative treatment of the authorities in this edition will lead readers to the conclusion, I hope, that Chaucer allowed himself licences in the handling of the four-beat line at the beginning of his life which he refused afterwards in the *House of Fame*, and certainly would never have allowed in the five-beat line. In other words, they will, I trust, be willing to assume for Chaucer a development in technique similar to that of Shakespeare and some other poets. They will also, if they agree

¹ In *Anglia*, vol. iv. Auz. p. 95.

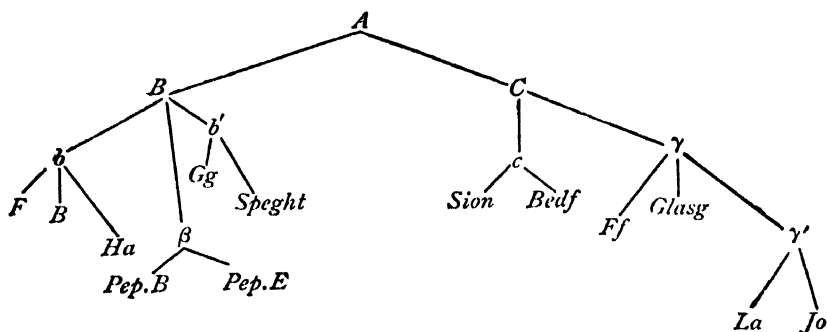
² In his *Untersuchungen über Chaucer's Boke of the Duchesse*, Halle, 1883.

with the present editor, resist the temptation of setting down these 'freely' constructed lines either to the poet's bad ear or (when all the MS. authorities agree) to the copyist's careless hand, but will look for an explanation in the survival of that rhythmic but non-syllabic system of verse which still lived on in England down to Chaucer's day, though much corrupted from its original purity. These native measures must have echoed in the young poet's ear when he first began to write in the foreign manner, and hence most of the so-called lame lines in the *Boke of the Duchesse*.

THE A B C

About the same time as the *Boke of the Duchesse*, perhaps a little later,¹ Chaucer wrote this poetical prayer to the Virgin. It is based upon a similar *A B C* contained in Guillaume de Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine*, a French Pilgrim's Progress of the fourteenth century.² Chaucer simplified the measure by increasing the number of rhymes from two to three, and reducing the length of the stanzas from twelve to eight; but the result is little more than an exercise. He would fain be a literal translator, but is forced by the exigences of the verse away from his model, only rising here and there, notably in the opening and the nineteenth strophes, above mechanical excellence.

There are thirteen MSS. and one printed edition (that of Speght 1602) available as authorities for this poem. I agree with Koch in the following classification:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 (Oxford).

Ha. = Harleian 7578 (British Museum), incomplete.

Pep. B } = Pepys 2006, Magdalene College, Cambridge (two copies), both incomplete.
 Pep. E }

Gg = Cambridge University Library, Gg 4. 27.

Sion = Sion College MS. (Shirley's).

Bedf. = Bedford MS. (Bedford Library).

Ff = MS. Ff 5. 30 in Cambridge University Library.

Glasg. = Glasgow, Hunterian Museum, Q 2. 25.

La. = Laud 740 (Bodleian Library).

John = St. John's College, Cambridge, G. 21.

Speght = Speght's Edition, 1602.

¹ Ten Brink places it as late as 1374.

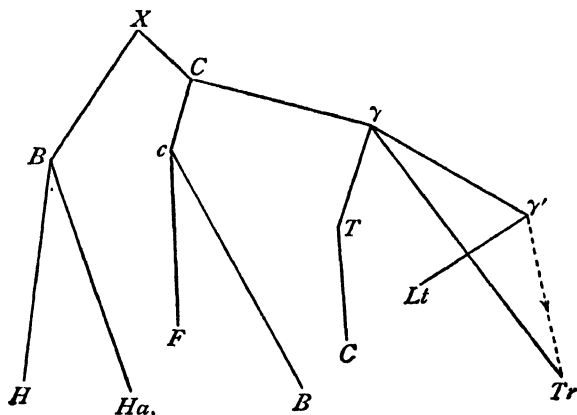
² It was commenced in 1330.

The thirteenth MS. Harl. 2257 cannot with certainty be assigned its place in the above scheme. It has general similarity with group B, but it is of little or no value. The best group is C, which is used as the basis of the text.

THE COMPLEYNT UNTO PITE

This is a better poem than the preceding one, and the mark of sincerity and deep feeling is upon it, though the metaphor is carried too far here and there for clearness. It is usual to place this poem before 1369, and to make it Chaucer's first original work extant, but both the style and the verse lead me to agree with Ten Brink (whose critical edition of the poem should be a pattern for all editors) in assigning a later date than this somewhere in the two years subsequent to the writing of the *Dethe of the Duchesse*. Whatever the date, this poem is the earliest example of the famous Chaucer stanza, or 'rhyme royal,' as it was subsequently called. Professor Skeat has pointed out recollections of a phrase or two from the *Thebeis* (Book xi.), and Mr. Pollard suggests a parallel between the adversaries of Pity and the first part of the *Roman de la Rose*. But the poem, French in style as it is, is yet original, and is generally interpreted, together with a passage of similar feeling in the *Boke of the Duchesse* (l. 30 ff.), as referring to an incident of unrequited love in the poet's life.

There are nine extant MSS., eight of which (in agreement with Ten Brink and Koch) I would arrange in the following scheme:—



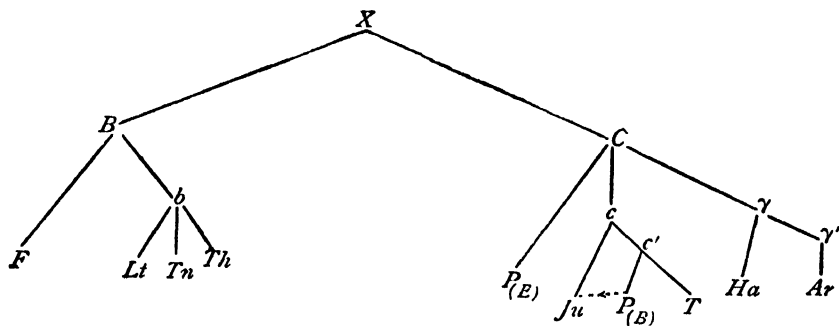
- T = Tanner MS. 346 (Bodleian Library).
 F = Fairfax MS. 16 " "
 B = Bodley MS. 638 " "
 Ha. = Harleian 7578 (British Museum).
 H = Harleian 78 " "
 C = Cambridge University Library, Ff 1. 6.
 Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).
 Tr. = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 19.

The dotted line is intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

MS. Harleian 7578 clearly belongs to the same group as H, but is a much better authority, and more frequently agrees with the derivatives from C. In several cases it supports emendations made by Ten Brink without consulting it (*e.g.* ll. 15, 19, and 101). I am in some doubt whether H and Ha. should be traced from the same original as the other MSS., or whether we should not rather in this case as in others look on H and Ha. as derivatives from an earlier draft of the poem made by Chaucer himself. MS. Phillipps 9053 I have not yet collated. The best group of MSS. is that marked C in the diagram, and of these MS. F has been used as the basis for the text.

THE COMPLEYNT OF MARS

This poem falls well within the second period of Chaucer's work, and was probably written after the poet's second mission to Italy in 1378-79, while the *A B C* and the *Compleynt unto Pite* came in all probability soon after the date of the first mission in 1372-73. The story is founded on one told in the *Metamorphoses* iv. 170-189 of the love of Mars for Venus and its discovery by Apollo. With this story Chaucer combines the popular astronomy of the day in accordance with which the planet Mars is in conjunction with the planet Venus in the sign of Taurus. Taurus is one of the two astrological houses of Venus, and into this the Sun (Phorbis Apollo) enters on April 12th each year. On the basis of two notes made by Shirley in the Trinity College MS. this astrological mythical story is also an allegory written 'at the comandement of the renowned and excellent Prynce my lord the Duc John of Lancastre,' and 'made by (*i.e.* about) my lady of York, daughter to the kyng of Spaygne and my lord huntingdoon, some tyme Duc of Excestre.' The 'lady of York' was John of Gaunt's sister-in-law, through his second wife Constance of Castile. 'My lord huntingdon' was John Holande, half-brother to Richard II., who married Elizabeth, daughter of Blanche, first Duchess of Lancaster. There are eight extant MSS. and one edition (that of Julian Notary 1499-1502) available as authorities. Of these the Fairfax, Tanner, and Longleat MSS., which belong to one group, are the best on the whole. The remaining authorities are difficult to arrange with certainty, but the following scheme expresses my view of their general interconnection. There is some room for doubt as to whether groups B and C should be traced to a single original rather than two drafts made by the poet at different times.



- F = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).
 Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).
 Tn. = Tanner 346 (Bodleian Library).
 P(Æ) = Pepys 2006 Hand E (Magdalene College, Cambridge).
 P(B) = Pepys 2006 Hand B " "
 T = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.
 Ha. = Harleian 7333 (British Museum).
 Ar. = Arch. Selden B 24 (Bodleian Library).
 Ju. = Julian Notary's Edition, 1499-1502.
 Th. = William Thynne's Edition, London 1532.

The dotted line is intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

The MSS. belonging to group B are certainly better on the whole than any single MS. in group C, but were a satisfactory example of this latter tradition available it would undoubtedly be the one to form the basis of a text. In ll. 1, 3, 4, 11, and many others the right reading is clearly furnished by one or more of this group, which has possibly been neglected because it has been seen to include such MSS. as the Harleian 7333 and Arch. Selden. These two authorities are of little or no independent value, more particularly the latter, which gives a text that has been purposely edited, yet they sometimes support good readings in MSS. of the B group in opposition to other MSS. of their own group, and such testimony is valuable. Examples are—l. 20, *to dure* for *to endure*; l. 75, *is* for *was*; l. 120, *this* for *the*, and *smoking* for *smoketh* or *smoked*; l. 143, *Venus weping* for *weping Venus*, etc. Had P(Æ) been complete, it would have been the best basis for this text; as it is, some approach to a satisfactory result has, it is hoped, been obtained by a combination of P(Æ) as far as it goes (viz. to l. 84) and P(B), with aid here and there from Ju. and T, and the adoption where called for of readings from the B group, such as *e.g.* l. 66, where the C group read *that thilke*, l. 80, where they read *he fil* (=fell), and some others, among them ll. 20, 75, 120, and 143 referred to above.

A COMPLEYNT TO HIIS LADY

This interesting *pot pourri* of verse-forms is found in only two MSS. and one edition, that of Stowe 1561. The two MSS. are Harleian 78 (by Shirley), and MS. Phillipps 9053 at Cheltenham, which last I have not been able to consult except indirectly through the critical notes in Professor Skeat's six-volume edition of Chaucer. He there says that Ph. is copied from Harleian 78, and this seems to be the case. All three authorities tack this fragment on to the *Compleynt unto Pile*, which is, however, complete without it. The poem is clearly intended as a metrical experiment, or series of experiments, and should not be taken too seriously. The similarity of a phrase here and there to the *Anelida* and *Arcyte*, and of the opening of the third section with the *Parlement of Foules* (ll. 90, 91), which are both serious poems, may just as well point to this work preceding them as following them in date. Some time shortly after 1373-74 seems, therefore, still to be most probable.

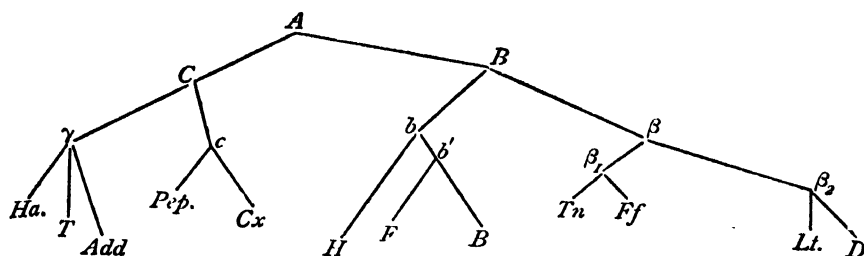
ANELIDA AND ARCYTE

This poem, like the preceding one, is chiefly interesting for the elaborate metrical experiments for which Chaucer made it the excuse. It opens with three

stanzas from the *Teseide*, which Chaucer recast later into heroic couplets for his *Knights Tale*. These are followed by four based partly on Statius, and these in turn by three more from the *Teseide*. It is possible that at least the first six stanzas and a half formed part of an earlier translation of the *Teseide*, now lost, and that the poet refers to this earlier work in the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women* when he says 'he made . . . al the love of Palamon and Arcyte of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte.' At l. 47 commences the story of 'queene Anelida and fals Arcite,' and this continues down to l. 210. What the source of this tale may be we do not know. At l. 211 begins the elaborate 'Compleynt of feire Anelida upon fals Arcite,' a more ambitious poem of the same kind as the *Compleynt to his Lady*. The fourteen stanzas of which it consists are arranged in a poem or introduction, two movements of six stanzas each, and a conclusion. With the exception of the last two stanzas in each of the movements of six, the stanzas are of nine decasyllabic lines rhyming *aab*, *aab*, *bab*. The fifth stanzas in the two movements or Strophes of six are divided into two parts, each of eight lines of octosyllabics, except the fourth and eighth which are decasyllabic. In the first part the rhymes run *aaab*, *aaab*, in the second the same rhymes are used in the reverse order *bbba*, *bbba*. The sixth stanza in each of the movements is of nine decasyllabics, rhymed as in the main body of the poem, but with the additional ornament of an internal rhyme on the fourth and eighth syllable of each line.

At the conclusion of the *Compleynt* the story is resumed, but breaks off after a single stanza which is only found in five of the eleven MSS. Chaucer doubtless intended to reintroduce Theseus, with whom the poem opens, as the avenger of Anelida.

There are eleven MSS. and one edition (Caxton's) of this poem, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows :—



Ha. = Harleian 7333 (British Museum).

T = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.

Add. = Shirley's Additional 16, 165 (British Museum).

Pep. = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

H = Harleian 372 (British Museum).

F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 " "

Tn. = Tanner 346 " "

Ff = MS. Ff 5. 30 (Cambridge University Library).

Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).

D = Digby 181 (Bodleian Library).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition, c. 1477-78.

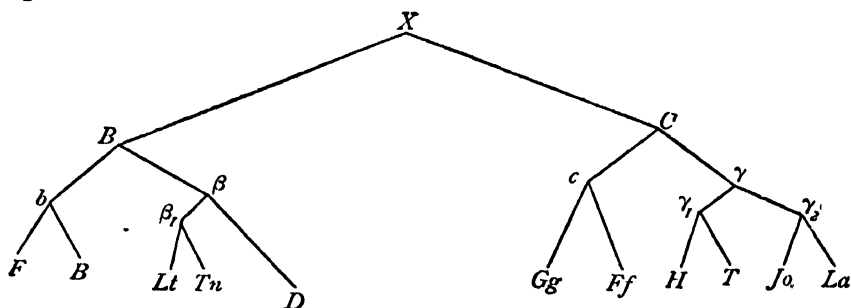
The best group of MSS. is C, and this is the one used as the basis of the text.

THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

This charming fancy is the only poem of any length written during the years that Chaucer was engaged upon his great masterpiece, the *Troilus and Cresseida*. As Dr. Koch has shown, the poet must have been commissioned in the summer of 1382 to celebrate the wooing and winning of Anne of Bohemia by Richard II. The marriage had taken place on January 14th of that year, after the successful mission of the English ambassadors to Bohemia in the previous January. Anne is represented in the poem by the formel (*i.e.* female) eagle and Richard by the royal eagle, while the two tercelles (*i.e.* males), 'of lower kind,' who plead for her love, are the Prince of Bavaria and the Margrave of Misnia, to each of whom Anne had been in turn contracted.

The material supplied him was too slight in itself for a poem of sufficient length and dignity, so the poet elaborated and ornamented his theme by a summary of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, a description of the Garden of Love taken from the *Teseide* of Boccaccio and a description of Nature and her birds based upon a passage in the *Planctus Nature* of Alain de l'Isle, though the Cistercian bishop had represented them in mediæval manner as embroidered on the garment of the Goddess, not, as Chaucer does, full of life and wit. His use of other men's work is seen to be much freer than it once was, and the poem is in all real senses an original one.

There are fourteen MSS. and one printed edition (Caxton's) which serve as authority for this poem, but some of them are so corrupt and show so much evidence of contamination that it is very difficult to discover their relation to the rest. These doubtful MSS. are printed below the remainder, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows:—



- F=Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).
 B=Bodley 638 "
 Lt.=Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).
 Tn.=Tanner 346 (Bodleian Library).
 D=Digby 181 "
 Gg=Cambridge University MS. Gg 4. 27.
 Ff=Cambridge University MS. Ff 1. 6.
 H=Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).
 T=Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.
 Jo.=St. John's College, Oxford, MS. Ivii.
 La.=Laud MS. 416 (Bodleian Library).

Seld. = Archibald Selden B 24.

Hh = Cambridge University MS. Hh 4. 12.

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

The best group of MS. is C, and this is the one used as the basis of the text.

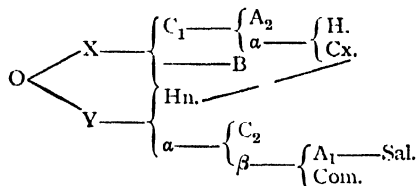
BOECE

(MARK H. LIDDELL)

The *Consolation of Philosophy* was one of the most popular books of the fourteenth century, and it is not to be wondered that Chaucer should have undertaken a translation of it. How great an interest this classic had over him can be seen from the numerous quotations from it he makes all through his work. His Latin scholarship, however, was by no means adequate to the task, a deficiency which he probably felt himself, for he makes very free use of an existing French version now commonly ascribed to Jehan de Meung. He used also the paraphrase which was common in early texts of the *Consolation*, as well as the commentary ascribed by tradition to Thomas Aquinas, and printed in fifteenth century editions of Boethius.

Despite these props and stays, however, Chaucer makes blunders which cannot be charged to the incompetent scholarship of the time, but must be laid directly to his own insufficient knowledge of Latin idiom, a fault doubtless due to the fact that the *Bocce* is one of the earliest of his longer works.

This edition contains a critical text made from all the known MSS. in which the translation has been preserved to us (including two newly-discovered ones). It follows MS. II i. 38 (C₁) Cambridge University Library, with such departures as are justified by critical examination of the other known MSS. These are:—MS. Additional 16,165 (A₂); MS. Harleian 2421 (H); MS. Bodley 797 (B); MS. Hengwrt 393 (Hn), at Peniarth; MS. II 3. 21 (C₂) of the Cambridge University Library; MS. Additional 10,340 (A₁); MS. Salisbury 13 (Sal.), in Salisbury Cathedral; MS. Auct. 3. 5 (Com.), in the Bodleian Library. Caxton's edition, made from *a* with frequent readings from Hn., is denoted by Cx.; Jehan de Meung's French translation is quoted from MS. Fr. 1079 (Fr.) unless otherwise noted. The text is based upon the following arrangement of the MSS., each of which, except Sal., which is a copy of A₁, has been collated all through the work.



The orthography is that of C₁, except where the few northern forms peculiar to the MS. have been changed to Chaucer's spelling. Several nonsensical sentences are set right for the first time by the critical method followed, but there still remain some passages which evidently got wrong in the original; it is very fortunate for us that the French version makes almost all of these clear.

TROIUS AND CRISEYDE

(W. S. McCORMICK)

Troilus and Criseyde is based upon Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, from which nearly a third is translated or adapted. The characters of the hero and heroine are, however, considerably modified, and Pandarus, who is transformed from the cousin to the uncle of Cressida, is practically Chaucer's own creation. For the development of the story in Book v., Chaucer evidently consulted the *Roman de Troie* of Benoît de Sainte-More, possibly also the *Historia Troiana* of Guido delle Colonne; and for the incidents in Cassandra's exposition of Troilus' dream Chaucer is indebted to Ovid and Statius.

Chaucer's further borrowings are few. Petrarch's eighty-eighth sonnet forms Troilus' love-song in Book i. 400-420. There are three considerable passages from Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophicæ*, which Chaucer was probably translating about the time of the composition of *Troilus*. The first (iii. 813-833) on 'fals felicité' is put into the mouth of Cressida; in the second (iii. 1744-1768) Boethius' celebration of divine love serves Troilus for another love-song; while the third (iv. 953-1085), Troilus' dreary moralising in the temple, is a fairly close rendering of Boethius' chapter on Free Will and Predestination. In Book v. two passages (ll. 1-14, and ll. 1807-1837) are taken from Boccaccio's *Teseide*, and the first three lines of the last stanza from Dante's *Paradiso*.

It is worth remarking that three of the above passages from *Boethius* and the *Teseide*, viz. iii. 1744-1768, iv. 953-1085, v. 1807-1827, are omitted in some MSS.

The relations of the MSS. of *Troilus and Criseyde* to each other are so complicated and variable, that a detailed statement is here impossible. In many cases portions of the same manuscript have been taken from different sources; and few manuscripts are without traces of contamination. They fall, however, for the most part, into three families (designated here α , β , and γ), which seem to represent three distinct editions or revisions; although in a number of passages, more especially in Book v., the α and β manuscripts frequently alter their relations to each other, and throughout the poem the variations among the β manuscripts are considerable. It appears probable, from a comparison of the readings of the three types with the originals from which Chaucer was translating, that in α type we have the first draft of the poem, copied in parts during its composition; that manuscripts of the β type give more than one partial revision by Chaucer of copies of his work before or after its completion; and that the γ type represents a later copy, either carelessly corrected by the author, or collated by some hand after Chaucer's death.

The following list of authorities may serve to indicate in a general way the relations of the MSS., or portions of MSS., to each type, at least for the first four Books.

MANUSCRIPTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| { | I. P—MS. Philipps 8252. |
| | α throughout. |
| | II. H ₂ —MS. Harl. 3943. |
| { | α (close to P) till iv. 196; β (close to H ₄) later. |
| | III. H ₄ —MS. Harl. 2392. |
| | α (with β readings) till III. 231 (?); β (with α readings) later. |

- { IV. G—MS. Gg 4. 27, Cambridge (first and last leaves of all the Books cut out).
 β till II. III. ; α later.
 { V. H₅—MS. Harl. 4912—(ends at IV. 686).
 β till II. III. ; α later. Throughout close to G.
 VI. J—MS. LI. St. John's College, Cambridge.
 β (with α readings) till IV. 400 (?) ; α later.
 VII. R—MS. Rawlinson Poet 163. Bodleian.
 β throughout ; omits Prologues to Books II. III. and IV.
 VIII. H₃—MS. Harl. 1239.
 β till II. 1033 ; γ from II. 1034 till III. 231 ; later, collated from various
 sources, but keeping close to α through Book IV.
 IX. S—MS. Arch. Selden B 24. Bodleian.
 collated throughout from γ and β , and following many of the errors of γ
 till II. 516.
 { X. A—MS. Addit. 12,044, British Museum. (Ends at V. 1820.)
 γ throughout (with occasional α or β reading).
 { XI. D—MS. v. ii. 13. Durham.
 close to A.
 { XII. S₂—MS. Arch. Selden *supra* 56. Bodleian.
 γ throughout (with occasional α or β reading).
 { XIII. Dg—MS. Digby 181. Bodleian. (Ends at III. 532.)
 close to S₂.
 { XIV. Cp.—MS. 61 Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.
 γ throughout.
 { XV. H₁—MS. Harl. 2280.
 close to Cp.
 { XVI. Cl.—MS. Campsall.
 close to Cp. and H₁.

[To these may be added two MS. fragments printed in *Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems* (Chaucer Society, 1880) ; and one MS. fragment of Book v. 1443-1498 in Cambridge University Library.]

EDITIONS

- XVII. Cx.—Caxton's Edition (1484).
 β throughout (with γ readings).
 XVIII. Th.—Thynne's Edition (1532).
 γ throughout (with Cx. and α readings, more especially in Books I. and II.)

[The Editions of Wynkyn de Worde (1517) and of Pynson (1526) are reprints of Caxton's text. In Sir Francis Kinaston's Latin Translation of the first two Books (1635), the English text is a reprint of Thynne's.]

MSS. J, Cp., H₁, and Cl. are the most accurate as to grammatical forms ; but none can be depended upon.

The present text is based upon J (MS. LI. St. John's College), and has been corrected throughout from readings of α and β types alone. But all the authorities have been examined, and all the important variations of γ type are given. In order to curtail the critical notes as much as possible, the mistakes occurring in J *alone* are corrected, and the spelling (including the insertion or deletion of final *e*) is normalised, in most cases, without special mention ; also, where possible, α , β , and γ have been employed to represent the MSS., or the majority of the MSS., belonging to these types respectively.

In printing the text for this edition, some assistance has been offered to the general reader by the indication of stressed syllables, by the use of the dotted *é* to

denote a separate syllable in the middle of the line, and by marking elision in such words as *n'as*, *n'il*, *n'olde*, *n'ot*, *th'ilke*, *th'effect*, *m'asterte*, *this* (for *this is*), etc. The modern use of *i* and *j*, and of *u* and *v*, has been adopted, as well as the modern spelling of *thou*, *you*, *our*, etc. In *her* (= *her*), and *hir* (= *their*), *o* (interjection), and *oo* (= *one*), *on* and *oon* (= *one*), *of* and *off*, *the*, *thee*, and *thé* (= *thrive*), the spelling has been differentiated to indicate the meaning; and in French words ending in *é*, the accent has been retained. The final *e* of *evere*, *nevere*, *levere*, etc., has been retained, as Chaucer's pronunciation was evidently *ev'rè*, *nev'rè*, *lev'rè*, etc.

CHAUCER'S WORDS UNTO ADAM HIS OWNE SCRIVEYN

This keen *jeu d'esprit* is only found in one manuscript (Trin. Coll. Camb. MS. R 3. 20) and in Shirley's edition of 1561. There can be no doubt as to its authenticity. Its probable date is 1385. (H. F. H.)

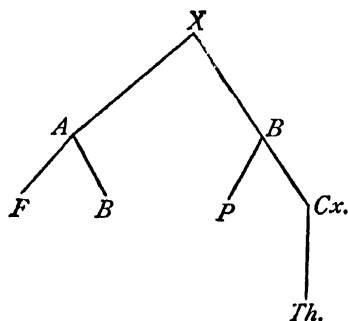
THE HOUS OF FAME

(H. FRANK HEATH)

With the *Hous of Fame* we leave the period of the poet's finished work. From this time on his plans were far more ambitious, but they were doomed to remain unfinished. The *Hous of Fame*, the *Legende of Good Women*, and, greatest of all, the *Canterbury Tales*, were none of them completed. At the close of the *Troilus* Chaucer had uttered the hope that God would 'Sende (him) might to make in som comedie,' and most critics are agreed that the *Hous of Fame* was meant to be the fulfilment of this intention. There is some reason for thinking, I believe, that the *Hous of Fame* had been commenced some years before 1383, and then laid aside. When the *Troilus* was complete, this unfinished 'comedy' came to Chaucer's mind, and hence the prayer. It is difficult, on any other assumption, to understand the use of the short couplet, an unsatisfactory measure at best, particularly for such a theme as the story of Æneas, which takes up the major part of the first book. Having finished the second book—in which the story advances rapidly enough, and with a light humorous touch throughout—the work was laid aside. When it was again taken in hand on the completion of the *Troilus* a new tone is noticeable, and a new invocation to Apollo, 'god of science and of light,' marks the fresh start. This is followed by an apology for the 'light and lewd' verse. It is not 'craft' but 'sentence' which is his aim, and throughout the humour is no longer playful but deeply ironical, for the poet has learnt to see his art and life in the light of common day. The close of the fragment describing the hall of Fame and the petitioners to the goddess is the purest piece of satire Chaucer ever wrote. But all this destroyed the original playful plan and rendered some striking close necessary. Failing this, no wonder the poet's golden eagle, having borne him up to the realm of Fame, finds it hard, as has been remarked, to get down again. No wonder 'the workmanship of the separate parts of the poem is much more masterly,' as the same critic adds, 'than the general plan.' The fragment we possess of the third book is longer than the first two put together. Chaucer had put new wine into an old

bottle.¹ The care bestowed on the poem is evident from the number of sources from which the poet drew. The mediæval machinery of a dream with a description of the temple of Venus offers the opportunity for giving an outline of the story of the *Æneid*. Then follows the appearance of the eagle and the journey to the house of Fame, the description of which is taken from the *Metamorphoses* xii. 33-63. Professor Ten Brink was the first to point out that in general plan and in a number of individual passages the influence of the *Divina Commedia* can be traced. Both poems are visions, in both there is a heaven-sent guide who may but accompany the poet in parts of his journey; both are divided into three books. Very probably the importance of Vergil in Dante's poem suggested the story of the *Æneid*. Certainly the idea of the golden eagle is taken from him (*Purgat.* ix.). The apostrophe to 'Thought,' at the opening of the second book, was suggested by the *Inferno* (ii. 7-9), the invocation in the third book by that at the beginning of the *Paradiso* (i. 13-27). The philosophy, however, is not Dante's, but rather—as the poet himself suggests—that of Boethius (ii. 464 ff.); yet the poem as a whole is Chaucer's, and none but his.

The *Hous of Fame* was not likely to be popular, and there are unfortunately only three MSS. and two editions to serve as authorities. I arrange them as follows:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge), incomplete.

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Th. = W. Thynne's Edition (1532).

The better group is B, and MS. P has been used as the basis of the text so far as it is available. From that point on Cx. and Th. were used with the aid of F and B. Th., it should be remarked, is not merely a reprint of Cx., for Thynne certainly had access to and made use of other authorities.

¹ Some support appears to be lent to this theory by the Fairfax MS., which commences the third book on f. 169, after a wide space, with a large illuminated capital, similar to that used at the opening of the poem; whilst the second book, which commences on f. 161, runs straight on after the close of the first without any space, and with a capital, which, though similar in design to that used for the other two books, is not quite so large.

THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

The Legende of Good Women, as Chaucer planned it, was intended to consist of a Prologue, the stories of nineteen women who have been true to love, and lastly, the legend of the crown of womanhood, Queen Alcestis, who gave up her own life to save her husband's. Such a series of poems had plainly been for some time in Chaucer's mind. The goodness of Alceste is the subject of two stanzas in the *Troilus*, and in the *Hous of Fame* (Bk. i. ll. 388-426), after telling the story of Dido out of Virgil's *Aeneid*, he gives quite a list of other faithful women, to whom, doubtless, he meant to apply the phrase he uses of Dido, that if it were not too long to endite he would have liked to write her love in full. Chaucer was certainly occupied with the *Hous of Fame* in 1383-1384, and the *Legende*—in which it is mentioned first in the poet's list of his own writings—must have immediately succeeded it. We know that on 17th February 1385 he obtained permission to exercise his Comptrollership by deputy, and it has been conjectured that the intention he expresses of sending this new poem to the Queen (ll. 496, 497), and the probability that she was meant to be identified with the good Alceste, are marks of gratitude for this particular favour, which may have been obtained through her intervention. Lydgate, in the Prologue to his *Fall of Princes*, even says that the *Legende* was written 'at the request of the quene,' but if so it would surely have been duly completed. Everything, however, points to 1385 as the year of its composition.

Of the nineteen (or twenty) legends planned, only nine were written. These celebrate (1) Cleopatra, who is represented (not quite in accordance, as Chaucer imagines, with 'storial sooth') as a martyr to her love for Antony; (2) Thisbe, who refused to survive her lover Pyramus (see Bottom's play in the *Midsommer Night's Dream*); (3) Dido; (4) the two victims of Jason's treachery, Hypsipyle and Medea; (5) Lucretia; (6) Ariadne; (7) Philomela, the victim of Tereus; (8) Phyllis, who slew herself for love of Demophon; (9) Hypermnestra, who accepted death at her father's hands rather than treacherously kill her husband. By the aid of some hints in the Prologue, and of a curious mention of these 'seintes legendes of Cupide' in the talk which precedes the Man of Law's story in the *Canterbury Tales*, it is possible to make a fair guess as to the names of the other ten women, in addition to Alcestis, whose praises Chaucer was too tired to sing. They belong to the same class of heroines as the nine he wrote of, and we need not trouble about them here. For the nine legends Chaucer had recourse chiefly to the *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* of Ovid, but he used also two Latin works by Boccaccio, viz. his *De Claris Mulieribus* and *De Genealogia Deorum*, while the story of Dido is taken mainly from Virgil, and that of Hypsipyle and Medea from the *Historia Trojana* of Guido delle Colonne. The only other point that need be mentioned is that the Prologue (much the most interesting part of the poem) exists in two different versions. The one which appears to be the earlier has 545 lines, of which 90—including one long passage on love tales, and a reference to Chaucer's own library of 'sixty bookes olde and newe' all full of stories—do not reappear in the revised text. In this many lines are altered, the position of others transposed, and the 90 omitted lines replaced by 124 new ones, bringing the number in the second version to 579. Some of the alterations seem intended to make the poem more

acceptable to the Queen, the rest are poetical improvements which may easily be studied in the parallel columns in which they are printed in this edition.

Nine MSS., besides Thynne's Edition (Th.), have been collated, as printed by the Chaucer Society, for the text of this poem, viz. Gg 4. 27, Cambridge (quoted as Gg); Fairfax (F); Tanner (Tan.); R 3. 19, Trinity College, Cambridge (Trin.); Arch. Seld. B 24, Bodleian Library (Arch. Seld.); Bodley MS. 638 (B); British Museum Additional MS. 9832 (Add.), and 12,524 (Add.₂); and Pepys MS. 2006 (Pepys).

Of these MSS. F and B must be derived immediately from the same original, and Tan., which shares most of their glaring faults, from the original of that. The text of Thynne's edition belongs to the same group, but Thynne must have collated it with other MSS., as he has supplied lines and words which F, B, and Tan. omit. In my notes F² stands for F and B; F³ for F, B, and Tan.; F⁴ for F, B, Tan., and Thynne.

The leading MS. in a second group is Trin., with which must be reckoned Add., which, however, stops at l. 1986. These two MSS. are almost as nearly identical as F and B, and contain a number of good readings. The other Museum fragment Add.₂, which only begins at l. 1640, belongs to the same group, as also does Arch. Seld. The latter, however, is a dangerous MS. to use, as its scribe, who may have worked from the same original used for Trin. and Add., has plainly introduced many emendations of his own to smooth away difficulties of sense or metre. I have occasionally denoted the agreement of Trin. and Add. by Trin.²; of Trin. Add. and Arch. Seld. by Trin.³; and of Trin. Add. Arch. Seld. and Add.₂ by Trin.⁴

The Cambridge MS. Gg stands by itself, in virtue of its possession of the first draft of the Prologue. Its readings are throughout of great importance, but its spelling is bad, and it lacks ll. 1836-1907. The Pepys fragment, which stops at l. 1367, though it has the second draft of the Prologue, is linked to Gg by possessing ll. 960, 961, which the other MSS. omit; but it sometimes agrees with the Trin. group against Gg. Its independent readings (with the possible exception of *yiftes* in l. 1126) are of no value.

In making my text I am sorry now that I did not take the Trinity MS. as my starting-point, but I for a long time suspected it of being overmuch edited. Thus the completeness and comparatively good spelling of Fairfax gave it the preference, but in my final revision I have systematically substituted the readings of the Trinity group, or of Gg, for those of the Fairfax where there was any possibility of doubt. In the matter of spelling I have cleared away a good many of the double vowels (especially *oo*) which are the chief disfigurement of F, and have removed a few eccentricities, though with a very sparing hand.

LATER MINOR POEMS

(H. FRANK HEATH)

TO ROSEMOUNDE

To the *Troilus* period belongs this playful ballade, which, like the preceding poem, is only found in one MS. (Rawl. Poet. 163, leaf 114) in the Bodleian Library, where it was discovered some years since by Dr. Furnivall, and afterwards rediscovered and first published by Professor Skeat. The metaphor with which the third stanza opens, and the ironical humour of its combination with the story of Isolde, unmistakably declare the authorship.

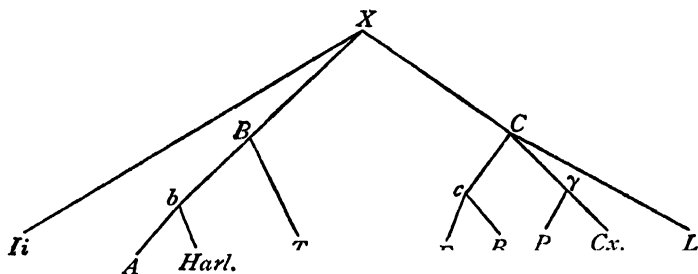
THE FORMER AGE

This pleasant rhapsody upon the good old times is based upon Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophie* (ii. met. v.), with echoes here and there from the *Roman de la Rose*. It is only found in two MSS., both in the University Library at Cambridge. Their press marks are Ii 3. 21 and Ih 4. 12. The former is the better of the two, and has been used as the basis of the text. This and the next four poems cannot be exactly dated. They were written after 1382, and probably before 1390.

FORTUNE

Balades de visage sans peinture, as this poem is called in the MSS., are a series of ballades, or rather a triple ballade, with a single envoy of seven, and possibly only six lines, in praise of the friend of the 'unpainted face,' who is faithful in adversity. It was possibly written after Chaucer's loss of office in 1386.

There are eight MSS. and one edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows :—



Ii = Cambridge University Library MS. Ii 3. 21.

A = Shirley's Ashmole MS. 59 (Bodleian Library).

Harl. = Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).

T = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20 (sheet 7 lacking).

F = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 (Bodleian Library).

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

L = Lansdowne MS. 699 (British Museum).

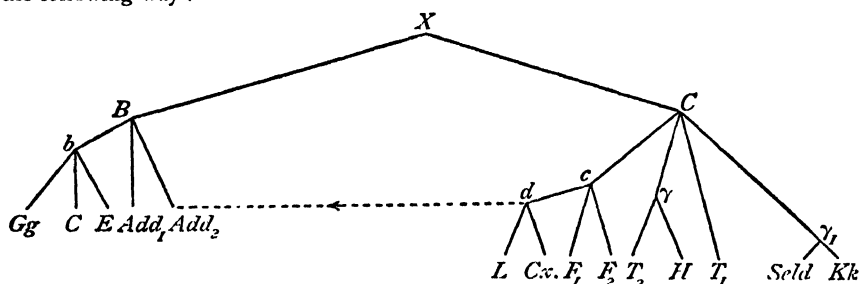
Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Ii is decidedly the best authority, and this has been made the basis of the text.

TRUTH

This ballade and the next, called *Gentillesse*, show Chaucer in his gravest mood, and reveal the finely-tempered spirit which underlay his ironical and sometimes cynical humour. Both poems, like the *Lak of Stedfastnesse*, owe their suggestion, no doubt, to Boethius, but *Truth* (which is the finest) less so than the others, while they all strike an intensely personal note.

There are thirteen MSS. and one printed edition of *Truth*, which I arrange in the following way :—



The dotted line is intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

Gg=Cambridge University Library Gg 4. 27.

C=Cotton MS. Cleopatra D vii. (British Museum).

E=Ellesmere MS.

Add.¹=Additional MS. 10,340 (British Museum).

Add.²=Additional MS. 22,139 " "

L=Lansdowne MS. 699 " "

F₁=Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).

F₂=Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library), second copy of the poem.

T₁=Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.

T₂=Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20, second copy of the poem.

H=Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).

Seld.=Arch. Selden B 24 (Bodleian Library).

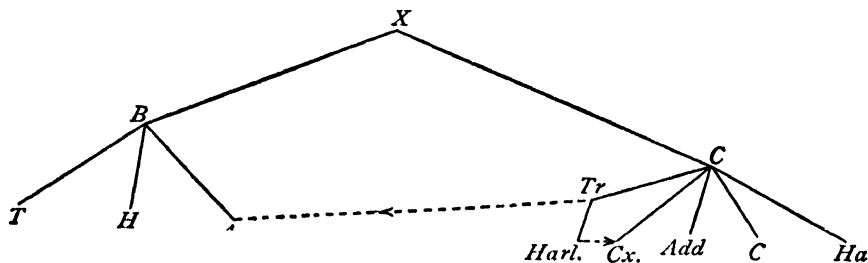
Kk=Cambridge University Library Kk 1. 5.

Cx.=Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Group B is the better of the two main groups into which the authorities fall, and of this group sub-group *b* is the better. I have used Gg as the basis of the text.

GENTILESSE

This fine ballade on the qualities that make a gentleman reminds one of the speech in which the Wife of Bath discourses upon 'gentillesse' (*Wife of Bath's Tale*, D 1109-1176). There are eight MSS. and one printed edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows :—



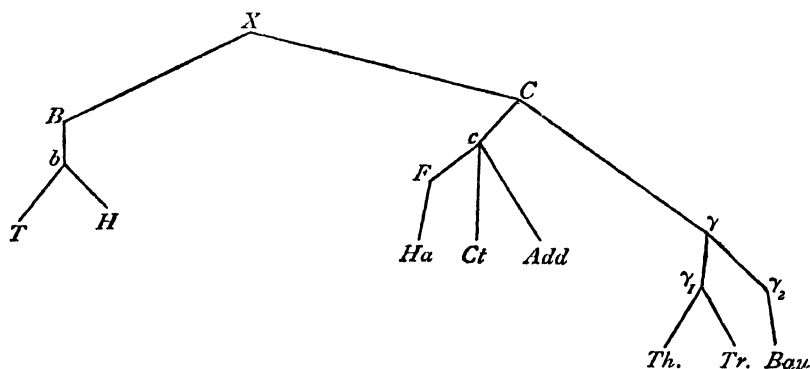
- T=Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.
 H=Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).
 A=Shirley's Ashmole MS. 59 (Oxford).
 Tr.=Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 14. 51.
 Harl.=Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).
 Add.=Additional MS. 22,139 (British Museum).
 C=Cotton MS. Cleopatra D vii. (British Museum).
 Ha.=Harleian MS. 2257 (British Museum).
 Cx.=Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

The dotted lines are intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

Group C is the better of the two main groups, and has been used as the basis of the text.

LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE

This ballade, which is chiefly notable for its envoy to King Richard, Shirley and others have placed between 1393 and 1399. But it is difficult to account for Chaucer's sudden accession of reformatory zeal towards the man who could alone fill his quickly-emptying purse. The poet, if we except this poem, had none of Langland's spirit, and was always of the Court party. Mr. Pollard has suggested, and with great show of reason, that this address to the King and reference to the instability of the times probably dates from the time when the young Richard was taking the government into his own hands, and throwing over the tutelage of his guardian uncles with the support of all his people's hopes. This would place the composition in or about 1389, and when read with this in mind the whole poem gains an added force. There are eight MSS. and one printed edition of this poem, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows :—



- T=Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20
 H=Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).
 F=Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).
 Ha.=Harleian MS. 7578 (British Museum).
 Ct.=Cotton MS. Cleopatra D vii. (British Museum).
 Add.=Additional MS. 22,139 (British Museum).
 Tr.=Trinity College, Cambridge, R 14. 51.

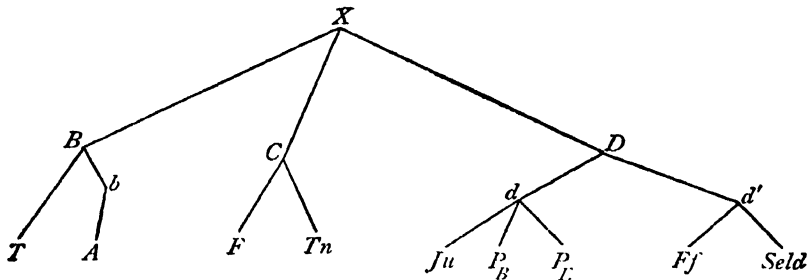
Ban. = Bannatyne MS. 1568 (Hunterian Museum, Glasgow).

Th. = Thynne's Edition (1532).

Group B is the better of the two main groups of authorities, and MS. II has been used as the basis of the text (cp. *supra*, p. xxxii).

THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS

These three ballades, to which Shirley gave the above title, are translations, more or less free, from the famous Savoyard poet, Sir Otes de Granson,¹ made probably to please Isabella, Duchess of York, the doubtful heroine of the *Compleynt of Mars*. The envoy, which is the best part of the poem, is wholly original. The date is hard to assign, but it is probably somewhere near 1393. There are eight MSS. and one printed edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows:—



T = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.

A = Shirley's Ashmole 59 (Oxford).

F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

Tn. = Tanner 346

P(B) = Pepys 2006 Hand B (Magdalene College, Cambridge), ll. 65-72 are wanting.

P(E) = Pepys 2006 Hand E " " " contains only ll. 45-82.

Ff = Cambridge University Library MS. Ff 1. 6.

Seld. = Arch. Selden MS. B 24 (Bodleian Library).

Ju. = Julian Notary's Edition (1499-1502).

The best group of MSS. is B, and I have used this as the basis of the text.

ENVOY TO SCOGAN

About the same time as *The Compleynt of Venus*, Chaucer wrote this playful reproach to his friend Henry Scogan for having given up his lady at 'Michelmesse,' when he found her careless of his distress. But some year or two earlier, in 1391, the poet had lost his post as Clerk of the King's Works, and he makes this an opportunity of begging for his friend's influence on behalf of the needy road-com-

¹ For more concerning Granson, cp. Piaget, 'Oton de Granson and ses Poesies,' *Romania*, vol. xix. 1800.

missioner exiled in the 'solitarie wilderness' of Greenwich. The prayer may have borne fruit in the pension granted him next year.

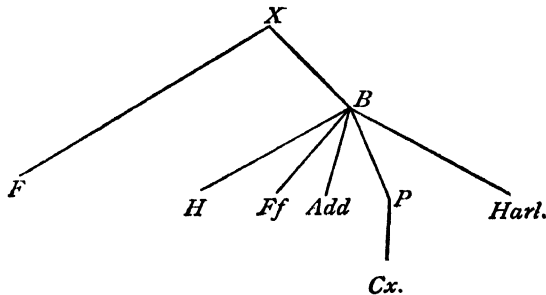
There are three MSS. (MS. Gg 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Camb.; MS. Fairfax 16, Bodleian Libr.; and MS. Pepys 2006, Magd. Coll. Camb.) and one edition (that of Thynne 1532) which serve as authorities for this poem. They all seem to belong to one group; there is certainly no sufficient evidence for dividing them, though MS. Fairfax is, on the whole, the best, and has been used as the basis for this text.

ENVOY TO BUKTON

This bitter-sweet ballade, in stanzas of eight lines, touches marriage, and is quite characteristic of the poet. It was written in 1396, as we know by the reference to the English prisoners taken in the expedition against Friesland of that year. There is only one MS. (Fairfax 16) besides two early printed editions of this poem, that of Julian Notary (1499-1502), and that of Thynne (1532). The text is based upon the Fairfax MS.

COMPLEYNT TO HIS PURSE

This sadly humorous poem must be one of the last, if not quite the last, we have from the poet's pen. It was addressed to Henry of Bolingbroke, 'the Conqueror of Brutes Albion,' and it won from him an additional pension of forty marks, which ensured Chaucer against penury in the closing months of his life. Professor Skeat thinks it probable that all the poem except the envoy was written at an earlier date, but without, it seems to me, sufficient ground. There are six MSS. and one early printed edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).

Ff = Cambridge University Library MS. Ff 1. 6.

Add. = Additional MS. 22,139 (British Museum).

P = Pepys MS. 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

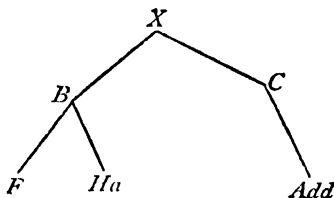
Harl. = Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

The best MS. is the Fairfax, which has been used as the basis of the text.

PROVERBS

These two proverbs, if indeed they are Chaucer's, add nothing to his reputation. There are three MSS. of these trifles, two of which, the Fairfax and the Harleian 7578, ascribe the authorship to the poet. I arrange the authorities as follows :—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

Ha. = Harleian MS. 7578 (British Museum).

Add. = Additional MS. 16, 165 (British Museum).

B is the better of the two groups of MSS., and MS. F has been made the basis of the text.

DOUBTFUL MINOR POEMS

(II. FRANK HEATH)

MERCILES BEAUTE

This triple roundel immediately follows several of Chaucer's genuine poems in the only MS. (Pepys 2006) in which it is found. Its manner is quite that of the poet, and it seems to have been well known, for its first line is quoted in Lydgate's 'Ballade in commemoration of our Ladie,' St. 22.

The poems that follow have no direct evidence as to their authorship, but they are sufficiently in Chaucer's manner, though they do not show him at his best, if they are his. They are all of an erotic turn.

AGAINST WOMEN UNCONSTANT

The Ballade 'Against Women Unconstant' is found in three MSS. (viz. Cotton Cleopatra D vii.; Harleian 7578; Fairfax 16), and in Stowe's edition of the works published in 1561. These authorities fall into two main groups, one of which consists of the Fairfax MS., the authority nearest to the original on the whole, and therefore made the basis of this text. The remaining authorities constitute the second group, within which the Cotton MS. and Stowe's edition form a subdivision traceable to a copy of the MS., of which Harleian 7578 was a copy.

The subheading of this poem is from the edition of 1561 which reads—'A Balade whiche Chaucer made agaynst women unconstant.'

COMPLEYNT DAMOURS

The *Compleynt Damours*, much the poorest of these doubtful poems, is also found in three MSS. (Fairfax 16; Bodley 638; and Harleian 7333). They fall into two groups, of which the Harleian MS. forms one, and the remaining MSS. the other. The common source of these two groups was almost certainly a MS. itself one or more removes from the original. None of the existing MSS. are good, but A on the whole forms the best basis for a text, and has been so used in this edition.

The reference to and quotation from the *Parlement of Foules* in the last stanza seems to be no evidence of its genuineness, whilst the subheading given in the Harleian MS. is cryptic and apparently nonsense.¹

BALADE OF COMPLEYNT, ETC.

The *Balade of Compleynt* is found in only one MS. (Addit. 16,165, fol. 256b in the British Museum); and the same is true of the *Balade that Chaucier made* (Addit. MS. 34,360, f. 21b), which was first printed in the *Athenæum*.

TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE

(MARK II. LIDDELL)

The *Astrolabe* gives us evidence of Chaucer's interest in exact science, as the *Boece* shows his leaning to philosophy. The *Astrolabe*, however, as a translation is far superior. Ripeness of scholarship, certainty of style, clearness of judgment; all these come out clearly in this later work.

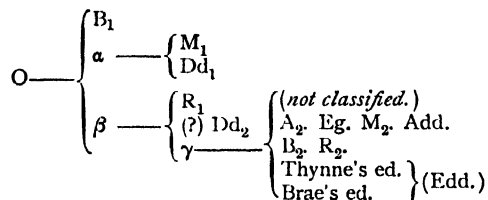
For the evidence of the introduction and the dates given in the body of the tract point to a late period of Chaucer's life. There is little of that uncertainty which characterises the *Boece*, and no infelicities of idiom or mistakes in construing the Latin. It is interesting to note in this connection that the testimony of the Colophon in the St. John's (Cambridge) MS. to the effect that Chaucer wrote the tract for his son Lewis, then under the tutelage of (? Ralph) Strode at Merton College, is borne out by the fact that the problems are adapted to the latitude of Oxford, and that MS. Bodley 619, the best of those that have come down to us, bears evidence of having been written by an Astronomer of Merton College. Chaucer's plan was an ambitious one, and comprehended a complete treatise on the subject (cp. his *First Partie*). He either did not live to complete it or tired of his work and abandoned it. The sources of the tract are Messahala's treatise for most of the 'conclusions,' and John de Sacrobosco's *de Sphæra* for the definitions and descriptive astronomy. The few conclusions not traceable to Messahala may be accounted for by assuming an edition in which there were extra conclusions inserted like those in

¹ It runs as follows :—And next folowyng begynnith an amerowse compleynte made at Wyndesore in the laste May sofore Novembre.

group γ of Chaucer's own tract. The few definitions not directly traceable to Sacrobosco are perhaps additions of Chaucer's own.

The technical character of the work has preserved it in a number of MSS.; eighteen are now known. Many of them are very poor, but, fortunately for a critical text, the inferior ones all derive from the same source which is itself preserved to us in good MSS. The following have been used for the text :—MS. Bodley 619 (B_1), the basis of the text; E. Museo 54 (M_1), in the Bodleian Library; Dd 3. 53 of the Cambr. Univ. Library; Rawl. D. 913 (R_1), in the Bodleian; Dd 12. 51 (Dd_2), Cambr. Univ. Library; Ashmole 391 (A_1) (fragmentary), Bodleian Library; Ashmole 360 (A_2), Bodleian; Bodley 68 (B_2); E. Museo 216 (M_2) (fragmentary), Bodleian; Rawl. Misc. 3, Bodleian.

MS. Bodley 619 (which was evidently copied by an astronomer) has been made the basis of the text on account of the almost uniform excellence of its readings. The text is critical, based upon an arrangement of the MSS. as roughly shown in the following table :—



γ shows a confusion in the arrangement of Pt. II., is late, and contains a number of spurious conclusions.

ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE

(MARK II. LIDDELL)

The chief interest that attaches to *The Romaunt of the Rose* is due to the possibility of its being wholly or in part the work of Chaucer. Its felicity as a translation, making anew, as it were, the French poem, the beauty and ease of its versification, the fact that Chaucer did translate Jehan de Meung's French poem, and that a large part of this version offers little to hang an objection to as far as Chaucerian grammar is concerned, have combined to enable it to resist most successfully all attempts to fix it among the spurious Chaucer pieces.

As the matter now stands it is generally agreed that Chaucer could not have written the part beginning somewhere about v. 1705¹ and ending with v. 5810. The last part, extending from this point to the end and commonly called C by scholars, may possibly have been written by Chaucer, though it contains some rhymes that are, to say the least, unusual in Chaucer. The first part, known as A, though brief when compared to B and C, has been held by many to be of Chaucer's early work. It is not possible to decide this question yet. All that we can say at present is that A (vv. 1-1705) may be part of the translation Chaucer says he made; that C is

¹ B is usually supposed to begin with v. 1706, but cp. the note to the verse.

also possibly Chaucer's, but this assumption is less likely than the former; that B (vv. 1706-5810) is probably the interpolation of a northern writer later than Chaucer who made an attempt to join the two parts of the poem A and C, and make a complete translation, but wearied of his task and dropped it at v. 5810. But it is just this part that Chaucer specifically refers to in *Leg.* 430, 431, where he speaks of 'misseying' women. This horrible slander is contained in vv. 4252-4266 of the English version. His translation must, therefore, have extended at least to this point, so that our version, if it is Chaucer's, was originally more complete than it is now. But whoever wrote it, the translation is well worthy to take a place beside Chaucer's best work; and it is difficult to understand how this comes to be the only surviving work of a poet who was such a master of English verse and had such power of reproducing with added skilful touches of his own Jehan de Meung's *Roman de la Rose*.

The present edition offers a text based almost solely upon the Glasgow MS. By comparison with the French original, many unintelligible lines have for the first time been corrected so as to make good Middle-English sense. Many unintelligible words have been put back into their proper form by observing the recurrence of certain scribal errors in the Glasgow MS. e.g. *i* and *y* for *e*, *a* for *o*, *e* for *o*, *u* for *ou*, *u* for *v*, *b* for *l*. The notes give such variants as are of any importance, together with such citations of the French original as are necessary to understand the English version.

Throughout the poem *u* and *v*, *i* and *j* are used with their modern values, except that *I* is retained for modern *J*. The dotted *ê* is used to denote a separate syllable in the middle of the line.

THE CANTERBURY TALES

THE PROLOGUE

*Here bygynneth the Book of the tales
of Caunterbury*

WHÁN that Aprill^e with his shour^es
soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the
roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour ;
Whan Zephirus eek with his sweté breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre cropp^es, and the yong^e sonne
Hath in the Ram his half^e cours y-ronne,
And smale fowel^es maken melodye, 9
That slepen al the nyght with open eye,—
So priketh hem Nature in hir corages,—
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrim-
ages,
And palmeres for to seken straunge
strondes,
To fern^e halw^es, kowthe in sondry londes ;
And specially, from every shir^es ende
Of Eng^elond, to Caunturbury they wende,
The hooly blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen whan that they
were seeke.

Bifl that in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay, 20
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,

8. *the Ram.* The sun runs one half course in
the sign of the Ram in March, and the second
half course in April. The latter ends April 11th.
17. *martir, i.e.* Thomas à Becket.

At nyght were come into that hostelrye
Wel nyne-and-twenty in a compaignye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle
In felawshipe, and pilgrimes were they
alle,

That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed att^e beste. 29
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everychon,
That I was of hir felawshipe anon,
And mad^e forward erly for to ryse,
To take oure wey, ther as I yow devyse.

But nathélees, whil I have tyme and
space,

Er that I ferther in this tal^e pace,
Me thynketh it accordaunt to resoun
To tell^e yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren and of what
degree, 40
And eek in what array that they were inne ;
And at a Knyght than wol I first bigynne.

A KNYGHT ther was and that a worthy
man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To riden out, he loved chivalrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.
Ful worthy was he in his lord^es werre,
And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
As wel in cristendom as in hethénesse,
And ever honoured for his worthynesse. 50

23. *was for were, H⁶.*

At Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne ;
Ful oftē tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven allē nacions in Puce.

In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce, --
No cristen man so ofte of his degree.

In Gernade at the sege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.

At Lyceys was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne; and in the
Gretē Sec

At many a noble armee hadde he be. 60

At mortal batailles hadde he been siftened,
And foughten for oure feith at Tramys-
sene

In lysted thrice, and ay slayn his foo.

This ilk worthy knyght hadde been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye

Agayn another hethen in Turkye;
And evermoore he hadde a sovereyn prys.

And though that he were worthy, he was
wys,

And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.

He never yet no vileynye ne sayde, 70

In al his lyf, unto no maner wight.

He was a verray parfit, gentil knyght.

But for to tellen yow of his array,

His hors weren goode, but he ne was nat
gay;

Of fustian he wered a gypon

Al bismotered with his habergeon,

For he was late y-come from his viage,

And wenté for to doon his pilgrymage.

With hym ther was his sone, a yong

SQUIER,

A lovyere and a lusty bacheler, 80

51. *Alisaundre*, Alexandria, taken by Pierre de Lusignan, in 1365.

52. *the bord bigonne*, taken the head of the table.

53. *Puce*, Prussia, i.e. in company with the Teutonic Knights.

54. *Lettow*, Lithuania. *Ruce*, Russia.

56. *Gernade*, Granada.

57. *Algezir*, taken from the Moors in 1344.

59. *Belmarye*, a Moorish kingdom in Africa.

62. *Lyceys*, in Armenia, taken from the Turks 1367.

63. *Satalye*, Attalia, taken from Turks 1361.

59. *the Grete See*, the Mediterranean.

60. *armee*, an expedition, especially one by sea; *aryue*, a disembarkation, H².

62. *Tramysene*, a Moorish kingdom in Africa.

65. *Palatye*, a Christian lordship in Anatolia.

74. *was for weren*, H², but *hors* may be plural, and refer to the knight's horses in general.

With lokkēs crulle as they were leyd in
presse.

Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.

Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly delyvere and greet of
strengthe;

And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie,

In Flaundres, in Artoys and Pycardie,

And horn hym weel, as of so litel space,

In hope to stonden in his lady grace. 88

Embrouded was he, as it were a meede

Al ful of fresshē flourēs whyte and reede;

Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day;

He was as fressh as is the monthe of May.

Short was his gowne, with slevēs longe
and wyde;

Wel koude he sitte on hors and fairē ryde;

He koudē songēs make and wel endite,

Juste and eek daunce and weel purtreye
and write.

So hootē he lovde that by nyghtertale

He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyn-
gale.

Curteis he was, lowely and servysable,

And carf biforn his fader at the table. 100

A YEMAN hadde he and servantz namo

At that tyme, for hym listē ridē soo;

And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.

A sheef of pocok arwēs, bright and kene,

Under his belt he bar ful thriftily—

Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly;

His arwēs drouped noght with fetherēs
lowe --

And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.

A not-heed hadde he, with a broun visage.

Of woodcraft wel koude he al the usage.

Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer, 111

And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,

And on that oother syde a gay dagger,

Harnesed wel and sharpe as point of spere;

A Cristophere on his brest of silver sheene;

An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene.

A forster was he, soothly as I gesse.

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,

86. *In Flaundris*, i.e. in minor expeditions against the French.

88. *lady grace*: 'lady' is here a genitive.

115. *Cristophere*, a small figure of St. Christopher worn as a protection from evil.

That of hir smylyng was ful symple and
coy ;

Hire gretteste ooth was but by seintē
Loy, 120

And she was clepēd madame Eglentyne.
Ful weel she soong the servicē dyvyne,
Entunēd in hir nose ful semēly,
And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly
After the scole of Stratford-attē-Bowe,
For Frenssh of Parys was to hire un-
knowe.

At metē wel y-taught was she with-alle,
She leet no morsel from hir lippēs falle,
Ne wette hir fyngers in hir saucē depe.
Wel koude she carie a morsel and wel
kepe, 130

Thát no drope ne fille upon hire breste ;
In curteisie was set ful muchel hir leste.
Hire over-lippē wypēd she so clene,
That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng
sene

Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir
draughte.

Ful semēly after hir mete she raughte,
And sikerly she was of greet desport,
And ful plesaunt and amyable of port,
And peynēd hire to countrefetē cheere 139
Of Court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But for to speken of hire conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous
Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or
bledde.

Of smalē houndēs hadde she that she fedde
With rosted flessch, or milk and wastel
breed ;

But soorē wepte she if oon of hem were
deed, 148

Or if men smoot it with a yerdē smerte ;
And al was conscience and tendrē herte.

120. *seintē Loy*. St. Eligius refused to take an oath which King Dagobert demanded of him, so perhaps this means the Prioress did not swear at all.

125. *After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe*, i.e. Anglo-Norman French, still in use in convents such as the Benedictine nunnery at Stratford-le-Bow, where Chaucer probably means that his Prioress was educated. The French spoken at Court at this date would be French 'of Paris.'

127. *At mete*, etc., a reminiscence of a passage in the *Roman de la Rose*, l. 13,612 sqq.

Ful senyly hir wympul pynchēd was ;
Hire nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,
Hir mouth ful smal and ther-to softe and
reed,

But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed ;
It was almoost a spannē brood I trowe,
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war ;
Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,
And ther-on heng a brooch of gold ful
sheene, 160

On which ther was first write a crownēd A,
And after *Amor vincit omnia*.

Another NONNē with hire haddē she
That was hire Chapēleynē, and PRĒSTĒS
thre.

A MONK ther was, a fair for the
maistrie,

An outridere, that lovēde venerie ;
A manly man, to been an abbot able,
Ful manya deyntee hors hadde he instable,
And whan he rood men myghte his
brydel heere 169

Gýnglen in a whistlyng wynd als cleere,
And eek as loude, as dooth the chapel belle,
Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle.
The reule of seint Maure or of seint Beneit,
By-cause that it was old and som-del
streit,—

This ilkē Monk leet oldē thyngēs pace,
And heeld after the newē world the space.

He yaf nat of that text a pullēd hen
That seith that hunters bethnat hooly men,
Ne that a Monk whan he is reccheles,
Is likned til a fissh that is waterlees ; 180
This is to seyn, a Monk out of his cloystre,
But thilkē text heeld he nat worth an oystre ;
And I seyde his opinioun was good.

159. *gauded*, dyed, especially dyed green ; or perhaps, having in green the gawdies, or large beads which stood for the Lord's Prayer.

162. *Amor vincit omnia*: Love overcomes all things.

173. *seint Maure*, a disciple of *seint Beneit* or Benedict, established the Benedictine Order in France.

177. *that text*, from the Decretal of Gratian, 'Sicut piscis sine aqua caret vita, ita sine monasterio monachus.'

179. *reccheles*, reckless ; *cloysterles*, H only ; neither reading is satisfactory.

What sholde he studie and make hym-
selven wood,

Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure,
Or swynken with his handes and laboure,
As Austyn bit? how shal the world be
served?

Lat Austyn have his synk to him reserved.
Therefore he was a prikasour a right;
Greihoundes he hadde, as swift as fowel
in flight: 190

Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
I seigh his sleeves y-purified at the hond
With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;
And for to festne his hood under his chyn
He hadde of gold y-wroght a ful curious pyn,
A love knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face as he hadde becn enoynt.
He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;
Hise eyen stepe and rollynge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed; 202
His bootes souple, his hors in greet estaat.
Now certainly he was a fair prelaat.
He was nat pale, as a forpyned goost;
A fat swan loved he best of any roost;
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.

A FRERE ther was, a wantowne and
a merye,

A lymytour, a ful solempne man, 209
In alle the ordres foure is noon that kan
So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage;
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen at his owene cost;
Unto his ordre he was a noble post,
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he
With frankeleyns over al in his contree;
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun,
For he hadde power of confessioun,
As seyde hym-self, moore than a curat,
For of his ordre he was licenciat. 220
Ful swetely herdé he confessioun,
And plesaunt was his absolucioun.

199. *he, E it*

210. *ordres foure*, Dominicans, Carmelites, Franciscans, and Augustinians.

212. *ful many a mariage*, etc., *i.e.* he found husbands for women he had himself seduced.

220. *licenciat*, *i.e.* he was licensed to hear confessions without asking leave of the parson.

He was an esy man to yeve penaunce
Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce;
For unto a poure ordre for to yive
Is signé that a man is wel y-shryve;
For, if he yaf, he dorsté make avaunt
He wisté that a man was répentant;
For many a man so harde is of his herte
He may nat wepe al thogh hym soore
smerte, 230

Therefore in stede of wepyng and preyéres
Men moote yeve silver to the poure freres.
His typet was ay farsed full of knyves
And pynnés, for to yeven yonge wyves;
And certainly he hadde a murye note;
Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote:
Of yeddlynges he baar outré the pris;
His nekké whit was as the flour-de-lys,
Ther-to he strong was as a champioun.
He knew the tavernes well in all the toun
And everich hostiler and tappestere 241
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere;
For unto swich a worthy man as he
Acordéd nat, as by his facultee,
To have with siké lazars aqueyntaunce;
It is nat honeste, it may nat advance
For to deelen with no swiche poraille;
But al with riche and selleres of vitaille.
And over al, ther as profit sholde arise,
Curteis he was and lowely of servyse, 250
Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous.
He was the besté beggere in his hous,*
For thogh a wydwe haddé noght a sho,
So plesaunt was his *In principio*,
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng er he wente:
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.
And rage he koudé, as it were right a
whelpé.

252. Hengwrt MS. here inserts two lines:

'And yaf a certeyn ferme for the graunt,
Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt,'

i.e. paid rent for his privilege and was left undisturbed by his bretheren. The couplet is probably Chaucer's, but may have been deliberately omitted by him, as it interrupts the sentence.

254. *In principio*, the beginning of St. John's Gospel, to the first few verses from which magical value was attached.

256. *His purchas*, etc. The proceeds of his begging were much greater than the rent or 'ferme' (see note to l. 252) which he paid to his convent.

257. H reads 'and rage he couthe and pleye[n] as a whelpé.'

In lovè-dayes ther koude he muchel helpe,
 For there he was nat lyk a cloysterer
 With a thredbare cope, as is a poure scolér,
 But he was lyk a maister, or a pope ; 261
 Of double worstedè was his semycope,
 That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
 Somwhat he lipsèd for his wantownesse,
 To make his Englissh sweet upon histonge,
 And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde
 songe,

His eyen twynkled in his heed alyght
 As doon the sterrès in the frosty nyght.
 This, worthy lymytour was cleped Huberd.

A MARCHANT was ther with a forkèd
 berd, 270

In mottèleye, and hye on horse he sat ;
 Upon his heed a Flaundryssh bevere hat ;
 His bootès claspèd faire and fetisly ;
 His resons he spak ful solempnely,
 Sownynge alway thencres of his wynnynge.
 He wolde the see were kept for any thing
 Bitwixè Middelburgh and Orèwelle.
 Wel koude he in eschaungè sheeldès selle.
 This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette,
 Ther wistè no wight that he was in dette,
 So estatly was he of his governaunce 281
 With his bargaynes and with his
 chevysaunce.

For sothe he was a worthy man with-alle
 But, sooth to seyn, I noot how men hym
 calle.

A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also
 That unto logyk haddè longe y-go.
 As leenè was his hors as is a rake,
 And he nas nat right fat, I undertake,
 But lookèd holwe, and ther-to sobrelly ;
 Ful thredbare was his overeste courtèpy ;
 For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice,
 Ne was so worldly for to have office ;
 For hym was levere have at his beddes heed
 Twénty bookès clad in blak or reed
 Of Aristotle and his philosophie,
 Than robès riche, or fithèle, or gay sautrie :

277. *Middelburgh*, nearly opposite the Orwell on the Dutch coast. Professor Hales notes that between 1384 and 1388 the wool-staple was at Middelburgh instead of at Calais.

278. *sheeldes*, French crowns or *écus*: he could profit by the turn of exchange.

But al be that he was a philosophre,
 Yet haddè he but litel gold in cofre ;
 But al that he myghte of his freendes hente
 On bookès and his lernynge he it spente,
 And bisily gan for the soulès preye 301
 Of hem that yaf hym wher-with to scoleye.
 Of studie took he moost cure and moost
 heede,

Noght o word spak he moorè than was
 neede,

And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
 And short and quyk and ful of hysentéce.
 Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche
 And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

A SERGEANT OF THE LAWÈ, war and
 wys,

That often haddè been at the Parvys, 310
 Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
 Discreet he was, and of greet reverence ;
 He semèd swich, his wordès weren so
 wise.

Justice he was ful often in Assise,
 By patente and by pleyn commissioun :
 For his science and for his heigh renoun.
 Of fees and robès hadde he many oon ;
 So greet a purchasour was nowher noon.
 Al was fce symple to hym in effect,
 His purchasynge myghtè nat been infect.
 Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas, 321
 And yet he semèd bisier than he was.
 In termès hadde he caas and doomès alle
 That from the tyme of kyng William
 were falle ;

Ther-to he coude endite and make a thyng,
 Ther koudè no wight pynchen at his
 writynge ;

And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.
 He rood but hoornly in a medlee cote,
 Girt with a ceint of silk, with barrès smale ;
 Of his array telle I no lenger tale. 330

A FRANKÈLEYN was in his compaignye.

297. *philosophre*, an allusion to the philosophy of the alchemists.

310. *Parvys*, church-porch, *i.e.* of St. Paul's, where lawyers met for consultation.

319. *fce symple*. The meaning may be either (literally) that the Sergeant could overcome all restrictions on ownership, or (metaphorically) that he could carry all before him.

Whit was his berd as is a dayȝsye,
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sope in wyn;
To lyven in delit was ever his wone,
For he was Epicurus owenē sone,
That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit
Was verrailly felicitee parfit.

An housholdere, and that a greet, was he:
Seint Julian was he in his contree; 340
His breed, his ale, was always after oon;
A better envyned man was nowher noon.
Withoutē bakē mete was never his hous,
Of fissh and flessch, and that so plenteuous
It snowed in his hous of mete and drynke.
Of allē deyntees that men koudē thynke
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe
And many a breem and many a luce in
stuwe. 350

Wo was his cook but if his saucē were
Poynaunt and sharpe and redyal his geere.
His table dormant in his halle alway,
Stood redy covered al the longē day.
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;
Ful oftē tymē he was knyght of the shire.
An anlaas, and a gipsy al of silk,
Heeng at his girdel, whit as mornē milk;
A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour.
Was nowher such a worthy vavasour. 360

An HABERDASSHERE, and a CAR-
PENTER,

A WEBBE, a DYERE, and a TAPYCE, --
And they were clothed alle in o lyveree
Of a solēmpne and greet fraternitee;
Ful fresh and newe hir geere apikēd was;
Hir knyvēs werē chapēd noght with bras,
But al with silver, wroght ful clene and
weel,
Hire girdles and hir pouches everydeel.
Wel semēd ech of hem a fair burgeys
To sitten in a yeldehalle, on a days. 370

332. *heed for berd*, F.

340. St. Julian was famed for providing his votaries with good entertainment.

341. *after oon*, of one kind, *i.e.* the best.

363. *o*, one. H reads 'Weren with uss eekē clothed in oo lyvere.'

364. F^o add *a* before *greet*, with which reading we must scan: 'Of a sō | lempne and |,' etc.

Éverich for the wisdom that he kan
Was shaply for to been an alderman.
For catel haddē they ynogh and rente,
And eek hir wyvēs wolde it wel assente;
And ellēs certeyn weřē they to blame.
It is ful fair to been y-cleped *Madame*,
And goon to vigiliēs al bifore,
And have a mantel roialliche y-bore.

A COOK they haddē with hem for the
nonēs, 379
To boille the chiknēs with the marybones,
And poudrē-marchant tart and galyngale;
Wel koude he knowe a draughte of
Londoun ale;
He koudē rooste and sethe and boille
and frye,
Máken mortreux and wel bake a pye.
But greet harm was it, as it thoughtē me,
That on his shyne a mormal haddē he.
For blankmanger, that made he with the
beste.

A SHIPMAN was ther, wonynge fer by
weste;
For aught I woot he was of Dertēmouthe.
He rood upon a rouncey as he kouthe, 390
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.
A daggere hangynge on a laas hadde he
Aboutē his nekke under his arm adoun.
The hootē somer hadde maad his hewe
al broun;
And certeinly he was a good felawe.
Ful many a draughte of wyn hadde he
y drawe
Fro Burdeuxward whil that the Chapman
sleepe.
Of nyce conscience took he no keepe. 398
If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond;
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,
His stremēs and his daungers hym bisides,
His herberwe and his moone, his lode-
menage,
Ther nas noon swich from Hullē to Cartage.
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake:
With many a tempest hadde his berd
been shake;

400. *By water*, etc., *i.e.* he drowned his prisoners.

He knew wel alle the havenes, as they were,
From Gootlond to the Cape of Fynystere,
And every cryke in Britaigne and in Spayne.
His barge y-clepéd was the Maudélayne.

With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF
PHISIK ;

In all this world ne was ther noon hym lik,
To speke of phisik and of surgerye ;
For he was grounded in astronomye.
He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel
In hourés, by his magyk natureel.
Wel koude he fortunen the ascendent
Of his ymáges for his pacient.
He knew the cause of everich maladye,
Were it of hoot, or cold, or moyste, or drye,
And where they engendred and of what
humour ;

He was a verray parfit praktisour.
The cause y-knowe and of his harm the
roote,

Anon he yaf the siké man his boote.
Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries
To sende him droggés and his letuaries,
For ech of hem made oother for to wyne,
Hir frendshipe nas nat newé to bigynne.
Wel knew he the oldé Esculapius
And Deýscorides, and eek Rufus,
Olde Ypocras, Haly and Galyen,
Serapion, Rasis and Avycen,
Averrois, Damascien and Constantyn,

408. *Gootlond*, the Isle of Gottland.

411. *With us ther was*, F⁶ ; *Ther was also*, H.

415. *a full greet deel*, F⁶ ; *wonderful wel*, H.

416. *In hourés*, i.e. the astrological hours.

418. *ymages*, astrological figures, cp. *Hours of Fame*, iii. 175-180.

420. *hoot, or cold*, etc., the four elements of which the world was believed to be composed.

430. *Dryscorides*, Dioscorides, a physician of the 2nd century A.D., born in Cilicia.

430. *Rufus*, a physician of Ephesus, about the time of Trajan.

431. *Olde Ypocras*, Hippocrates, born in Cos about 460 B.C.

431. *Haly*, or Hali, an Arabian commentator on Galen in the 11th century : John Serapion and the famous Avicenna were his contemporaries.

431. *Galyen*, Galen, born at Pergamus 130 A.D.

432. *Rasis*, or Rhazes, an Arabian physician of the 10th century.

433. *Averrois*, born at Cordova 1126.

433. *Damascien*, John Damascene, an Arab physician and theologian of the 9th century.

433. *Constantyn*, Constantinus Afer, born at Carthage in the 12th century.

Bernard and Gatésden and Gilbertyn.
Of his dieté mesurable was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of greet norissyng and digestible.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,
Lynéd with taffata and with sendal,
And yet he was but esy of dispençe,
He kepté that he wan in pestilence.
For gold in phisik is a cordial,
Therefore he lovédé gold in special.

A GOOD WIF was ther of bisidé BATHE,
But she was som-del deef, and that was
scathe.

Of clooth-makyn she haddé swich an
haunt

She passéd hem of Yprés and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon
That to the offrynge bifore hire sholdé
goon ;

And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was
she,

That she was out of allé charitee.

Hir coverchiefs ful fyné weren of ground,—
I dorsté swere they weyédén ten pound,—
That on a Sondag weren upon hir heed.

Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite y-teyd, and shoes ful moyste
and newe ;

Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of
hewe.

She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,
Housbondes at chirché dore she haddé
fyve,

Withouten oother compaignye in
youth,—

434. *Bernard*, Bernardus Gordonius, a contemporary of Chaucer, Professor of Medicine at Montpellier.

434. *Gatésden*, John Gatesden, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and court physician in the first half of the 14th century. He wrote a medical treatise called *Rosa Anglica*.

434. *Gilbertyn*, Gilbertus Anglicus, one of the earliest English writers on medicine, fl. 1250.

442. *pestilence*. The great plague of the 14th century was in 1349, but lesser ones recurred every few years.

450. *to the offrynge*. Offerings in kind or money at mass and other services were presented by the people going up in order to the priest.

460. *at chirche dore*. The first part of the marriage service used to be read there.

But ther-of nedeth nat to speke as
nowthe,—

And thriës hadde she been at Jerusálem ;
She haddé passéd many a straungé strem ;
At Rome she haddé been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at Seint Jame, and at Coloigne,
She koudé muchel of wandrynge by the
weye.

Gat-tothéd was she, soothly for to seye.
Upon an amblere esily she sat, ⁴⁶⁹
Y-wympléd wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe ;
A foot mantel aboute hir hipés large,
And on hire feet a paire of sporés sharpe.
In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and
carpe ;

Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,
For she koude of that art the oldé daunce.

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a POURE PERSOUN OF A TOUN ;
But riche he was of hooly thoght and werk ;
He was also a lernéd man, a clerk, ⁴⁸⁰
That Cristés Gospel trewely wolde preche :
His parissshens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient ;
And swich he was y-prevéd ofté sithes.
Ful looth were hym to cursen for his tithes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Unto his pouré parissshens aboute,
Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce :
He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer
asonder, ⁴⁹¹

But he ne lafte nat for reyn ne thonder,
In siknesse nor in meschief to visite
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheepe he yaf
That firste he wroghte and afterward he
taughte.

Out of the gospel he tho wordés caughte,

^{465.} *Boloigne*, Boulogne, where an image of the Blessed Virgin was exhibited to pilgrims.

^{466.} *In Galice at S. Jame*, i.e. at the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Galicia in Spain.

^{466.} *Coloigne*, to the shrine of the Three Kings of the East at Cologne.

^{476.} *koude the olde daunce* ('Qu'el scet toute la vieille dance,' *Rom. de la Rose*), knew the ancient custom.

And this figure he added eek therto,
That if gold rusté what shal iren doo? ⁵⁰⁰
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewéd man to ruste ;
And shame it is, if a preest také keepe,
A shiten shepherde and a clené sheepe.
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive
By his clennesse how that his sheepe
sholde lyve.

Ile setté nat his benefice to hyre
And leet his sheepe encombred in the myre,
And ran to Londoun, unto Seint Poules,
To seken hym a chaunterie for soules ; ⁵¹⁰
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde,
But dwelte at hoom and kepté wel his folde,
So that the wolfe ne made it nat myscarie,—
He was a shepherde, and noght a
mercenarie :

And though he hooly were and vertuous,
He was to synful man nat despitous,
Ne of his speché daungerous ne digne,
But in his techyng déscreeit and benygne,
To drawn folk to hevene by fairnesse,
By good ensample, this was his bisynesse :
But it were any persone obstinat, ⁵²¹
What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,
Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the
nonys.

A betréd preest I trowe that nowher
noon ys ;
He waited after no pompe and reverence,
Ne maked him a spicéd conscience,
But Cristés loore, and his Apostles twelve,
Ile taughte, but first he folwed it hym
selve.

With hym ther was a PLOWMAN, was
his brother,
That hadde y-lad of dong ful many a
fother,— ⁵³⁰

A trewé swynkere and a good was he,
Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best, with al his hoolé herte,
At allé tymés, thogh him gamed or smerte,
And thanne his neighébore right as hym-
selve.

He woldé thresshe, and therto dyke and
delve,
For Cristés sake, for every pouré wight;
Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.

His tithes paydē he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his proprē swynk and his catel.
In a tabard he rood upon a mere. 541

Ther was also a REVE and a MILLERE,
A SOMNOUR and a PARDONER also,
A MAUNCIPLE and myself,—ther were
namo.

The MILLERE was a stout carl for the
nonēs,
Ful byg he was of brawn and eek of bones;
That provēd wel, for over-al, ther he cam,
At wrastlyng he wolde have away the ram.
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikkē
knarre,

Ther nas no dore that he nolde heve of
harre, 550

Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.
His berd, as any sowe or fox, was reed,
And therto brood, as though it were a spade.
Upon the cope right of his nose he hade
A werte, and theron stood a toft of herys,
Reed as the bristles of a sowes erys;
His nosēthirles blakē were and wyde;
A swerd and a bokeler bar he by his syde;
His mouth as wyde was as a greet forneys,
He was a jangler and a goliardeys, 560
And that was moost of synne and harlotries.
Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thries,
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.
A whit cote and a blew hood werēd he.
A baggpipe wel koude he blowe and
sowne,

And therewithal he broghte us out of towne.

A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a
temple,
Of which achātours myghtē take exemple
For to be wise in byyng of vitaille;
For, whether that he payde or took by
taille, 570

Algate he wayted so in his achaut
That he was ay biforn and in good staat.

548. *away*, E³ *alwey*.

559. *wyde*, H; *greet*, E⁶.

562. *tollen thries*, take threefold his due.

563. *yet he hadde a thombe of gold*. Millers are said to test samples with their thumb. Hence the proverb 'An honest miller has a thumb of gold,' which suggests the meaning here to be 'yet he was honest,—for a miller.'

570. *by taille*, on trust, the debt being scored on a tally.

Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace
That swich a lewēd mannēs wit shal pace
The wisdom of an heepe of lerned men?
Of maistrēs hadde he mo than thries ten,
That weren of lawe expert and curious,
Of whiche ther weren a duszeyne in that
hous

Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond
Of any lord that is in Engēlond, 580
To maken hym lyvē by his proprē good
In honour dettēlees, but he were wood,
Or lyve as scarsly as hym list desire;
And able for to helpen al a shire
In any caas that myghtē falle or happe;
And yet this Manciple settēchir aller cappe.

The REVē was a sclendré colerik man,
His berd was shave as ny as ever he kan;
His heer was by his erys round y-shorn,
His tope was dokēd lyk a preest biforn,
Ful longē were his leggēs and ful lene,
Y-lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene. 592
Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne,
Ther was noon auditour koude on him
wynne.

Wel wiste he, by the droghte and by the
reyn,

The yeldyng of his seed and of his greyn.
His lordēs sheepe, his neet, his dayērye,
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his
pultrye,

Was hoolly in this revēs governyng,
And by his covenant yaf the rekenyng 600
Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age;
Ther koude no man bryngē hym in
arrerage.

There nas baillif, ne hierde, nor oother
hync,

That he ne knew his sleighte and his
covyne;

They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.
His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth,
With grenē trees y-shadwēd was his
place.

581. *by his propre good*, on his own property.

586. *sette hir aller cappe*, set the caps of, i.e. befooled, them all.

594. *on*, E of.

595. *Wel wiste he*, etc., i.e. when he had to present his accounts he attributed the loss of the corn he had stolen to bad weather.

604. *he*, i.e. the Reeve, though H reads *they*.

He koudé bettré than his lord purchace.
 Ful riche he was a-storéd pryvely,
 His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly ⁶¹⁰
 To yeve and lene hym of his owene good
 And have a thank, and yet a gowne and hood.

In youthe he lernéd hadde a good myster,
 He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
 This Revé sat upon a ful good stot,
 That was al pomely grey, and highté
 Scot;

A long surcote of pers upon he hade,
 And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.
 Of Northfolk was this Reve of which I
 telle,

Biside a toun men clepen Baldéselle.
 Tukked he was as is a frere, aboute, ⁶²¹
 And ever he rood the hyndreste of oure
 route.

A SOMONOUR was ther with us in
 that place,

That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynnés face,
 For sawcéflem he was, with eyen narwe.
 As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe,
 With scaléd browés blake and piléd berd, -
 Of his visagé children were aferd.
 Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brym-
 stoon,

Boras, ceruce, ne oille of Tartre noon, ⁶³⁰
 Ne oynément that woldé clense and byte,
 That hym myghte helpen of the whelkés
 white,

Nor of the knobbés sittynge on his chekes.
 Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek
 lekes,

And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as
 blood;

Thanne wolde he speke, and crie as he
 were wood.

And whan that he wel drunken hadde
 the wyn,

Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
 A fewé termés hadde he, two or thre,
 That he had lernéd out of som decree, ---
 No wonder is, he herde it al the day, ⁶⁴¹
 And eek ye knowen wel how that a jay

624. *cherubynnes face*. The author of the *Philobiblon* speaks of books brilliantly illuminated as 'cherubici libri.'

Kan clepen *Watte* as wel as kan the pope.
 But whoso koude in oother thyng hym
 grope,

Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie;
 Ay *Questio quid juris* wolde he crie.

He was a gentil harlot and a kynde;
 A better felawe sholdé men noght fynde.
 He woldé suffice, for a quart of wyn,

A good felawe to have his concubyn ⁶⁵⁰
 A twelf monthe, and excuse hym atté fulle;
 And pryvély a fynch eek koude he pulle;

And if he foond owher a good felawe,
 He woldé techen him to have noon awe,

In swich caas, of the Ereðekenes curs,
 But-if a mannés soule were in his purs;

For in his purs he sholde y-punysshed be:
 'Purs is the Ereðekenes helle,' seyde he.

But wel I woot he lyéd right in dede,
 Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede,
 For curs wol slee,--right as assoillyng
 savith; ⁶⁶¹

And also war him of a *Significavit*.

In daunger hadde he at his owéne gise
 The yongé girlés of the diocise,

And knew hir conseil, and was al hir reed.
 A gerland hadde he set upon his heed,

As greet as it were for an alé-stake;
 A bokeleer hadde he maad him of a cake.

With hym ther rood a gentil PARDONER
 Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer,
 That streight was comen fro the court of
 Romé. ⁶⁷¹

Ful loude he soong *Com hider, lové, to me!*
 This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun,

Was never trompe of half so greet a soun.
 This Pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wax

But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of
 flex;

643. *Kan clepen Watte*, can call Walter.

646. *Questio quid juris*, the question is, what is the law?

652. *pulle a fynch*, as we should say 'pluck a pigeon,' plunder a fool.

662. *Significavit*, the opening word of a writ for imprisoning an excommunicated person.

664. *girlés*, youths of both sexes.

670. *Of Rouncivale*. 'An Hospital *Beate Marie de Rouncivale* in Charing, London is mentioned in the *Monasticon* [Dugdale's], t. ii. p. 443, and there was a Runceval Hall in Oxford. So that perhaps it was the name of some confraternity.' --Tyrwhitt. The parent Roncevaux was in Navarre.

By ounces henge his lokkés that he hadde,
 And therwith he his shuldres overspradde.
 But thynne it lay by colpons oon and oon;
 But hood, for jolitee, ne wered he noon,
 For it was trusséd up in his walet. 68r
 Hym thoughte he rood al of the newc̃ jet;
 Dischevelee, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
 Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare,
 Avernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe;
 His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe
 Bret-ful of pardon, comen from Rome al
 hoot.

A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot;
 No berd hadde he, ne never sholdé have,
 As smothe it was as it were laté shave;
 I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare. 69r
 But of his craft, fro Berwyk unto Ware
 Ne was ther swich another pardonere,
 For in his male he hadde a pilwé-beer,
 Which that, he seyde, was oure lady veyl;
 He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl
 That Seinté Peter hadde, whan that he wente
 Upon the see, til Jhesu Crist hym hente.
 He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of stones,
 And in a glas he haddé piggés bones. 700
 But with thise reliké, whan that he foud
 A pouré person dwellynge upon lond,
 Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye
 Than that the person gat in monthés tweye;
 And thus with feynéd flaterye and japes
 He made the person and the peple his apes.
 But, trewely to tellen atté laste,
 He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste;
 Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
 But alderbest he song an Offertorie; 710
 For wel he wisté, whan that song was
 songe,

He mosté preche, and wel affile his tonge
 To wynné silver, as he ful wel koude;
 Therefore he song the murierly and loudé.

Now have I toold you shortly, in a
 clause,

The staat, tharray, the nombre, and eek
 the cause

Why that assembled was this compaignye
 In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,
 That highte the Tabard, fasté by the Belle.
 But now is tymé to yow for to telle 720
 How that we baren us that ilké nyght,
 Whan we were in that hostelrie alyght;

And after wol I telle of our viage
 And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage.

But first, I pray yow of youre curteisye,
 That ye narette it nat my vileynye,
 Thogh that I pleynly speke in this mateere
 To tellé yow hir wordés and hir cheere,
 Ne thogh I speke hir wordés proprely;
 For this ye knowen al-so wel as I, 730
 Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,
 He moote reherce, as ny as ever he
 kan,

Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
 Al speke he never so rudéliche or large;
 Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewe,
 Or feyné thyng, or fyndé wordés newe.
 He may nat spare, althogh he were his
 brother;

He moot as wel seye o word as another.
 Crist spak hymself ful brode in hooly writ,
 And wel ye woot no vileynye is it. 740
 Eek Plato seith, whoso that kan hym rede,
 'The wordés moote be cosyn to the dede.'

Also I prey yow to foryeve it me
 Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
 Heere in this tale, as that they sholdé
 stonde;

My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.

Greet chiere made oure hoost us
 everichon,

And to the soper sette he us anon,
 And servéd us with vitaille at the beste:
 Strong was the wyn and wel to drynke
 us leste. 750

A semely man OURE HOOSTÉ was
 with-alle

For to han been a marchal in an halle.
 A largé man he was, with eyen stepe,
 A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe;
 Boold of his speche, and wys and well
 y-taught

And of manhod hym lakkedé right naught.
 Eek therto he was right a myrie man,
 And after soper pleyen he bigan,
 And spak of myrthe amongés othere
 thynges,

Whan that we haddé maad our rekenynges;

727. *pleynly speke*, E⁸; *speke al pleyn*, H.
 741. *Eek Plato seith*. Chaucer takes his
 quotation from Boethius, *De Consolatione*, bk.
 iii. prose 12.
 753. *is*, E² was.

And seyde thus : ' Now, lordynges,
trewely, 761

Ye been to me right welcome, hertely ;
For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
I ne saugh this yeer so myrie a compaignye
At onés in this herberwe as is now ;
Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthé, wiste I
how.

And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght,
To doon yow ese, and it shal costé noght.

' Ye goon to Canterbury—God yow
speede, 769

The blisful martir quité yow youre meede !
And, wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye ;
For trewely confort ne myrthe is noon
To ridé by the weye dounb as a stoon ;
And therfore wol I maken yow disport,
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som
confort.

And if you liketh alle, by oon assent,
Now for to stonden at my juggément,
And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
To-morwé, whan ye riden by the weye,
Now, by my fader soule, that is deed, 781
But ye be myrie, smyteth of myn heed !
Hoold up youre hond, withouten mooré
speche.'

Oure conseil was nat longé for to seche ;
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make
it wys,

And graunted hym withouten moore avys,
And bad him seye his verdit, as hym leste.

' Lordynges,' quod he, ' now herkneth
for the beste ;

But taak it nought, I prey yow, in
desdeyn ;

This is the poynt, to speken short and
pleyn, 790

That ech of yow, to shorté with your weye,
In this viage shal tellé talés tweye,—
To Caunterburyward, I mean it so,
And homward he shal tellen othere two,—
Of aventúres that whilom han bifalle.

782. For *smyteth of* (i.e. *off*), E⁸ read *I wol
yeve you*.

791. E⁵ read *oure* for *your*, but this makes the
Host too precipitate.

793, 794. As the pilgrims progress we see clearly
that they are only to tell *one* tale each on their
way to Canterbury.

And which of yow that bereth hym beste
of alle,

That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas
Talés of best senténcé and moost solaas,
Shal have a soper at oure aller cost, 799
Heere in this placé, sittyng by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And, for to maké yow the mooré mury,
I wol myselfen gladly with yow ryde
Right at myn owene cost, and be youre
gyde ;

And whoso wole my juggément withseye
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
And if ye vouché-sauf that it be so
Tel me anon, withouten wordés mo,
And I wol erly shapé me therfore.'

This thyng was graunted, and oure
othés swore 810
With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also
That he would vouché-sauf for to do so,
And that he woldé been oure gouvernour,
And of our talés juge and réportour,
And sette a soper at a certeyn pris,
And we wol reuléd been at his devys
In heigh and lough ; and thus, by oon
assent,

We been accorded to his juggément.
And therupon the wyn was fet anon ;
We dronken, and to resté wente echon,
Withouten any lenger taryng. 821

Amorwé, whan that day gan for to
sprynge,

Up roos oure Hoost and was oure aller cok,
And gadrede us togidre alle in a flok,
And forth we riden, a litel moore than paas,
Unto the wateryng of Seint Thomas ;
And there oure Hoost bigan his hors areste
And seyde, ' Lordynges, herkneth, if
yow leste :

Ye woot yowre foreward and I it yow
recorde.

If even-song and morwé-song accorde, 830
Lat se now who shal telle the firsté tale.
As ever mote I drynké wyn or ale,
Whoso be rebel to my juggément
Shal paye for all that by the wey is spent !

799. *oure aller*, of us all. *your aller*, H.

803. *gladly*, E⁸ *goodly*.

826. *the wateryng of St. Thomas*, a brook
near the second milestone on the Canterbury
Road, where pilgrims watered their horses.

Now draweth cut, er that weferrer twynne.
He which that hath the shorteste shal
bigynne.

Sire Knyght,' quod he, 'my mayster and
my lord,

Now draweth cut, for that is myn accord.
Cometh neer,' quod he, 'my lady Prioress,
And ye sire Clerk, lat he your shame-
fastnesse, 840

Nestudieth noght; leyhond to, everyman.'

Anon to drawen every wight bigan,
And, shortly for to tellen as it was,
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,
The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght,
Of which ful blithe and glad was every
wyght :

And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,
By foreward and by composicioun,
As ye han herd; what nedeth wordès
mo?

And whan this goode man saugh that it
was so, 850

As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his foreward by his free assent,
He seyde, 'Syn I shal bigynne the game,
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddès
name !

Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I
seye.'

And with that word we ryden forth oure
weye ;

And he bigan with right a myrie cheere
His tale anon, and seyde in this manère.

[TALES OF THE FIRST DAY]

[GROUP A]

KNIGHT'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Knyghtes Tale

WHILOM, as oldè stories tellen us,
Ther was a duc that hightè Theseus; 860
Of Atthenes he was lord and governour,
And in his tymè swich a conquerour,
That gretter was thernoon under the sonne.
Ful many a richè cōntree hadde he wonne;
That with his wysdom and his chivalrie
He conquered al the regne of Femenye,
That whilom was y-clepèd Scithia;
And weddedè the queene Ypolita,
And broghte hire hoom with hym in his
contrée

With muchelglorie and greet solempnytee,
And eek hir fairè suster Emelye. 871
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duc to Atthenes ryde,
And al his hoost in armès hym bisyde.

Knight's Tale. A discussion of Chaucer's
adaptation of Boccaccio's *Teseide* in this tale
will be found in the Introduction.

866. *the regne of Femenye*, the kingdom of the
Amazons.

871. *faire*, H⁶ *yonge*.

And certès, if it nere to long to heere,
I wolde han told yow fully the manere
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
By Theseus and by his chivalrye;
And of the gretè bataille for the nones
Bitwixen Atthenès and Amazones; 880
And how asseged was Ypolita,
The fairè, hardy queene of Scithia,
And of the feste that was at hir weddyngc,
And of the tempest at hir hoom-comyngc;
But al that thyng I moot as now forbere.
I have, God woot, a largè feeld to ere,
And waykè been the oxen in my plough.
The remenant of the tale is long ynough,
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route.
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute, 890
And lat se now who shal the soper wynne;
And ther I lefte I wol ageyn bigynne.

This duc, of whom I makè mencion,
Whan he was come almost unto the
toun,

In al his wele, and in his moostè pride,
He was war, as he caste his eye aside,
Where that ther kneled in the hye weye
A compaignye of ladyes, tweye and tweye,

Ech after oother, clad in clothés blake ;
But swich a cry and swich a wo they make
That in this world nys creature lyvyng
That herdé swich another waymentyng :
And of this cry they noldé nevere stenten,
Til they the reynés of his brydel henten.

‘What folk been ye, that at myn
hóm-comýnge

Perturben so my festé with cryýnge ?’

Quod Thesëus, ‘Have ye so greet envye
Of myn honoúr, that thus compleyne and
crye ?

Or who hath yow mysboden or offended ?
And telleth me if it may been amended,
And why that ye been clothéd thus in
blak ?’ 911

The eldeste lady of hem allé spak

Whan she hadde swownéd with a deedly
cheere,

That it was routhé for to seen and heere,
And seyde, ‘Lord, to whom fortune hath
yeven

Victorie, and as a conqueror to lyven,
Nat greveth us youre glorie and youre
honour,

But we biseken mercy and socour.

Have mercy on oure wo and oure distresse :
Som drope of pitee, thurgh thy gentillesse,
Upon us wrecchéd wommen lat thou falle :
For certés, lord, ther is noon of us alle
That she ne hath been a duchesse or a
queene.

Now be we caytyves, as it is wel scene :
Thankéd be Fortune and hire falsé wheel,
That noon estat assureth to be weel.

And certés, lord, to abyden youre presence,
Heere in the temple of the goddesse
Clemence

We han ben waityng al this fourté-
nyght ;

Now help us, lord, sith it is in thy
myght. 930

‘I wrecché, which that wepe and
waillé thus,

Was whilom wyf to kyng Cappaneus,
That starf at Thebés ; curséd be that
day !

And allé we that been in this array,
And maken al this lamentacioun,

931. *waillé, E³ cric.*

We losten alle oure housbondes at that
toun,

Whil that the seegé ther-abouté lay,
And yet now the oldé Creon, weylaway !
That lord is now of Thebés, the citee,
Fulfilde of ire and of iniquitee, 940
He, for despit and for his tirannye,
To do the dedé bodyes vileynye
Of alle oure lordés, whiché that been
slawe,

Haath alle the bodyes on an heepe y-drawe,
And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,
Neither to been y-buried nor y-brent,
But maketh houndés etc hem in despit.’

And with that word, withouten moore
respit,

They fillen gruf, and criden pitously,

‘Have on us wrecched wommen som
mercy, 950

And lat oure sorwé synken in thyn herte.’

This gentil duc down from his courser
sterle

With herté pitous, whan he herde hem
speke.

Hym thoughté that his herté woldé breke
Whan he saugh hem, so pitous and so maat,
That whilom weren of so greet estaat ;
And in his armés he hem alle up hente,
And hem conforteth in ful good entente,
And swoor his ooth, as he was trewé
knyght, 959

He woldé doon so ferforthly his myght
Upon the tiraunt Creon hem to wreke,
That all the peple of Grece sholdé speke
How Creon was of Theseus y-served
As he that hadde his deeth ful wel
deserved.

And right anon, withouten moore abood,
His baner he displayeth and forth rood
To Thebésward, and al his hoost biside.
No neer Atthénés woldé he go ne ride,
Ne take his esé fully half a day, 969
But onward on his way that nyght he lay ;
And sente anon Ypolita the queene,
And Emelye, hir yongé suster sheene,
Unto the toun of Atthenés to dwelle,
And forth he rit ; ther is namoore to telle.

The redé statue of Mars with spere
and targe

949. *fillen gruf, fell on their faces.*

So shyneth in his whitë baner large,
That alle the feeldës glyteren up and doun,
And by his baner born is his penoun
Of gold ful riche, in which ther was y-bete
The Mynotaur, which that he slough in
Crete. 980

Thus rit this duc, thus rit this conquerour,

And in his hoost of chivalrie the flour,
Til that he cam to Thebës, and alighte
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoughte fighte.
But, shortly for to speken of this thyng,
With Creon, which that was of Thebës
kyng,

He faught, and slough hym manly as a
knyght,

In pleyen bataille, and putte the folk to
flyght,

And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rente adoun bothe wall and sparre
and rafter 990

And to the ladyes he restored agayn
The bonës of hir housbondes that weren
slayn,

To doon obsequies as was tho the gyse.
But it were al to longe for to devyse
The gretë clamour and the waymentynge
Thát the ladyes made at the brennyng
Of the bodies, and the grette honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
Dooth to the ladyes whan they from hym
wente ;

But shortly for to telle is myn entente.

Whan that this worthy duc, this
Theseus, 1001

Hath Creon slayn, and wonné Thebës thus,
Stille in that feeld he took al nyght his reste,
And didd with al the contree as hym leste.

To ransake in the taas of bodyes dede,
Hem for to strepe of barneys and of wede,
The pilours diden bisynesse and cure
After the bataille and disconfiture.

And so bifel that in the taas they founde,
Thurgh-girt with many a grevous, blody
wounde, 1010

Two yongë knyghtës, liggyng by and by,
Bothe in oon armës, wroght ful richëly,

977. *the feeldes*, sometimes wrongly explained
as the heraldic ground of his banner; but cp.
Anelida, l. 40.

993. *obsequies*, *H exequies*.

Of whichë two Arcita highte that oon,
And that oother knyght highte Palamon.
Nat fully quyke, ne fully dede they were,
But by here cote-armures and by hir gere
The heraudes knewe hem best in special,
As they that weren of the blood roial
Of Thebës, and of sustren two y-born.

Out of the taas the pilours han hem torn
And han hem caried softe unto the tente
Of Theseus, and ful soonë he hem sente
To Atthenës, to dwellen in prisoun
Perpetuelly, he noldë no raunsoun.

And whan this worthy duc hath thus y-don,
He took his hoost and hoom he rood anon,
With laur crownëd as a conquerour ;
And ther he lyveth in joye and in honour
Terme of his lyve ; what nedeth wordës mo?
And in a tour, in angwissh and in wo, 1030
This Palamon and his felawe Arcite
For evermoore ; ther may no gold hem
quite.

This passeth yeer by yeer and day by day,
Till it fil onës, in a morwe of May,
That Emelye, that fairer was to sene
Than is the lylic upon his stalkë grene,
And fresher than the May with flourës
newe,—

For with the rosë colour stroof hire hewe,
I noot which was the fyner of hem two,—
Er it were day, as was hir wone to do,
She was arisen and al redy dight : 1041
For May wole have no slogardrie a nyght,
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte
And maketh hym out of his slepe to sterte,
And scith, ' Arys, and do thyn òbservaunce.'
This makëd Emelye have rémembráunce
To doon honour to May, and for to ryse.
Y-clothëd was she fresshe, for to devyse ;
Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse
Bihynde hir bak, a yerdë long, I gesse ; 1050
And in the gardyn, at the sonne up-riste,
She walketh up and doun, and as hire liste
She gadereth flourës, party white and rede,
To make a subtil gerland for hire hede,
And as an aungel hevenyssshly she soong.

The gretë tour, that was so thikke and
stroong,

Which of the castel was the chief dongeoun
(Ther as the knyghtës weren in prisoun,
Of whichë I toldë yow and tellen shal),

Was evene joynant to the gardyn wal,
 Ther as this Emelye hadde hir pleyynge.
 Bright was the sonne, and cleer that
 morwenynge,
 And Palamon, this woful prisoner,
 As was his wone, bi leve of his gayler,
 Was risen, and roméd in a chambre on
 heigh, 1065

In which he al the noble citee seigh,
 And eek the gardyn, ful of braunches grenc,
 Ther as this fresshè Emelye the sheene
 Was in hire walk and roméd up and down.
 This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun,
 Goth in the chambré romynge to and fro,
 And to hymself compleynynge of his wo ;
 That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, 'allas !'
 And so bifel, by aventure or cas,
 That thurgh a wyndow, thikke of many
 a barre 1075

Of iren, greet and square as any sparre,
 He cast his eyen upon Emelya,
 And therewithal he bleynte and cridè, 'A !'
 As though he stongen were unto the herte.
 And with that cry Arcite anon up sterte,
 And seyde, 'Cosyn myn, what eyleth thee,
 That art so pale and deedly on to see ?
 Why cridestow ? who hath thee doon
 offence ?

For Goddès love, taak al in pacience
 Oure prisoun, for it may noon oother be ;
 Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.
 Som wikke aspèct or disposicioun
 Of Saturne, by sum constellacioun,
 Hath yeven us this, although we hadde
 it sworn ;

So stood the hevene whan that we were
 born ; 1090
 We moste endure : this is the short and
 playn.'

This Palamon answerde, and seyde
 agayn,

'Cosyn, for sothe of this opinioun
 Thow hast a veyn ymaginacioun ;
 This prison causéd me nat for to crye,
 But I was hurt right now thurghout myn eye
 Into myn herte, that wol my bané be.
 The fairnesse of that lady that I see
 Yond in the gardyn romen to and fro,
 Is cause of al my crying and my wo. 1100
 I noot wher she be womman or goddesse,

But Venus is it, soothly, as I gesse.'
 And therewithal on kneés down he fil,
 And seyde : 'Venus, if it be thy wil
 Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure
 Bifore me, sorweful, wrecché créature,
 Out of this prisoun helpe that we may
 scapen.

And if so be my destynce be shapen,
 By cternè word, to dyen in prisoun,
 Of our lynage have som compassioun, 1110
 That is so lowe y-brought by tyrannye.'

And with that word Arcitè gan espye
 Wher as this lady roméd to and fro,
 And with that sighte hir beautee hurte
 hym so,

That if that Palamon was wounded sore,
 Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or moore ;
 And with a sigh he seyde pitously :
 'The fresshè beautee sleeth me sodeynly
 Of hire that rometh in the yonder place,
 And but I have hir mercy and hir grace,
 That I may seen hire attè leestè weye, 1125
 I nam but deed ; ther is namoore to seye.'

This Palamon, whan he tho wordès
 herde,

Dispitously he lookéd, and answerde,
 'Wheither seistow this in earnest or in pley ?'
 'Nay,' quod Arcite, 'in earnest, by my
 fey !

God helpe me so, me list ful yvele pleye.'
 This Palamon gan knytte his browès
 tweye,

'It nre,' quod he, 'to thee no greet
 honour,

For to be fals, ne for to be traitour 1130
 To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother
 Y-sworn ful depe, and ech of us til oother,
 That never, for to dyen in the peyne,
 Til that deeth departé shal us tweyne,
 Neither of us in love to hyndré oother,
 Ne in noon oother cas, my leevé brother,
 But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me
 In every cas, as I shal forthren thee.
 This was thyn ooth, and myn also certeyn ;
 I woot right wel thou darst it nat withseyn.
 Thus artow of my conseil, out of doute :
 And now thow woldest falsly been aboute
 To love my lady, whom I love and serve,
 And ever shal, til that myn herté sterfe.
 Nay certès, false Arcite, thow shalt nat so ;

I loved hire first, and toldé thee my wo
As to my conseil, and my brother sworn
To forthré me, as I have toold biforn.
For which thou art y-bounden as a knyght
To helpen me, if it lay in thy myght; 1150
Or ellés artow fals, I dar wel seyn.'

This Arcité ful proudly spak ageyn;
'Thow shalt,' quod he, 'be rather fals
than I;

And thou art fals, I telle thee, outrély,
For *par amour* I loved hire first er thow.
What wiltow seyn? thou wistest nat yet now
Whether she be a womman or goddesse!
Thyn is affeccíoum of hoolynesse,
And myn is love as to a creature;
For which I toldé thee myn aventure 1160
As to my cosyn and my brother sworn.
I posé that thow lovedest hire biforn,
Wostow nat wel the oldé clerkés sawe,
That *who shal yeve a lovère any lawe*;
I love is a gretter lawe, by my pan,
Than may be yeve of any erthely man?
And therfore positif lawe and swich decree
Is broken al day for love, in ech degree.
A man moot nedés love, maugree his heel;
He may nat flee it, thogh he sholde be
deed, 1170

Al be she mayde, or wydwe, or ellés wyf;
And eek it is nat likly, al thy lyf,
To stonden in hir grace; namoore shal I;
For wel thou woost thyselfen, verraily,
That thou and I be dampnéd to prisoun
Perpetuclly; us gayneth no raunsoun.

We stryven as dide the houndés for the
boon,

They foughte al day, and yet hir part
was noon;

Ther cam a kyte, whil that they weren
so wrothe,

And baar away the boon bitwixe hem
bothe; 1180

And therfore, at the kyngés court, my
brother,

1147. For *conseil* Lansdowne MS. reads *cosin*,
cp. l. 1161.

1163. *olde clerkes sawe*. The proverb is found
in Boethius, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, lib.
iii. met. 12, translated by Chaucer: 'But what
is he that may yeve a lawe to loveres? Love is
a gretter lawe and a strengere to hymself than any
lawe that men may yeven.'

Éch man for hymself, ther is noon oother.
Love, if thee list, for I love and ay shal,
And soothly, leevé brother, this is al.
Heere in this prisoun mooté we endure
And everich of us take his aventure.'

Greet was the strif, and long, bitwix
hem tweye,

If that I haddé leyser for to seye;
But to theffect. It happéd on a day,—
To telle it yow as shortly as I may,— 1190
A worthy duc, that highte Perotheus,
That felawe was unto duc Theseus,
Syn thilké day that they were children lite,
Was come to Atthenes, his felawe to visite,
And for to pleye, as he was wont to do;
For in this world he lovéd no man so,
And he loved hym as tendrely agayn.
So wel they lovede, as oldé bookés sayn,
That whan that oon was deed, soothly to
telle,

His felawe wente and soughte hym doun
in helle,— 1200

But of that storie list me nat to write.

Duc Perotheus lovéd wel Arcite,
And hadde hym knowe at Thebés, yeer
by yere;

And finally, at réquest and preyére
Of Perotheus, withouten any raunsoun,
Duc Theseus hym leet out of prisoun
Frelly to goon wher that hym liste over-al,
In swich a gyse as I you tellen shal.

This was the forward, pleylnly for tendite,
Bitwixen Theseus and hym Arcite; 1210
That if so were that Arcite were y-founde,
Ever in his lif, by day or nyght, oo stounde,
In any contree of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was accorded thus,
That with a sword he sholdé lese his heed:
Ther nas noon oother remedie, ne reed,
But taketh his leve and homward he him
spedde:

Lat hym be war, his nekké lith to wedde.

How greet a sorwe suffreth now Arcite!

1193. Chaucer is out here in his mythology,
for Pirithous, King of Thessaly, was originally
the enemy of Theseus, and invaded Attica.

1200. Chaucer takes this from the *Roman de
la Rose*. According to the original legend
Theseus and Pirithous visited hell, when the
latter was minded to carry off its queen, Pro-
serpina.

1212. oo, MSS. or.

The deeth he feeleth thurgh his hertē
smyte ; 1220

He wepeth, wayleth, crieth pitously ;
To sleen hymself he waiteth privly.
He seyde, 'Allas that day that I was born !
Now is my prisoun worsē than biforn ;
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle,
Nat in my purgatorie, but in helle.
Allas that ever knew I Perothēus !
For ellēs hadde I dwelled with Thesēus,
Y-fetered in his prisoun evermo.

Thanne hadde I been in blisse, and nat
in wo, 1230

Oonly the sighte of hire, whom that I
serve,—

Though that I never hir gracē may
deserve,—

Wolde han suffisēd right ynough for me.
O deerē cosyn Palamon,' quod he,
'Thyn is the victorie of this aventure !
Ful blisfully in prison maistow dure,—
In prisoun ? certēs nay, but in paradys !
Wel hath Fortune y-turned thee the dys,
That hast the sighte of hire and I
thabscnce. 1230

For possible is, syn thou hast hire presence,
And art a knyght, a worthy and an able,
That by som cas, syn Fortune is chaunge-
able,

Thow maist to thy desir some tymcatteyne,
But I, that am exilēd and bareyne
Of allē grace, and in so greet dispeir,
That ther nys erthē, water, fir, ne eir,
Ne creature, that of hem makēd is,
That may me heele, or doon confort in
this—

Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope and
distresse ; 1240

Farwel, my lif, my lust and my gladnesse !
'Allas, why pleynten folk so in commūne
Of purvieaunce of God, or of Fortune,
That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse
Wel better than they kan hem self devyse ?
Som man desireth for to han richēsse,
That cause is of his moerdre, or greet
siknesse ;

And som man wolde out of his prisoun fayn,
That in his hous is of his meynce slayn.

1226. my, om. H⁶.

1248. heele, H⁶ helpe.

Infinite harmēs been in this mateere, 1259
We witen nat what thing we preyen heere.
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous.
A dronkē man woot wel he hath an hous,
But he noot which the rightē wey is thider,
And to a dronkē man the wey is slider ;
And certēs in this world so faren we,—
We seken faste after felicitēe,
But we goon wrong ful often, trewely.
Thus may we seyē alle, and namely I,
That wende and hadde a greet opinioun
That if I myghte escapen from prisoun,
Thanne hadde I been in joye and perfit
heele, 1271

Ther now I am exilēd fro my wele.
Syn that I may nat seen you, Emelye,
I nam but deed, there nys no remedye.'

Upon that oother syde, Palamon,
Whan that he wiste Arcitē was agon,
Swich sorwe he maketh that the grete tour
Resoundēd of his youlyng and clamour ;
The purē fettres on his shynēs grete
Weren of his bittre, saltē teerēs wete. 1280
'Allas !' quod he, 'Arcita, cosyn myn,
Of al oure strif, God woot, the fruyt is
thyn ;

Thow walkest now in Thebēs at thy large,
And of my wo thow yvest litel charge.
Thou mayst, syn thou hast wysdom and
manhede,

Assemblen alle the folk of oure kynrede,
And make a werre so sharpe on this citee,
That by som aventure, or som treetee,
Thow mayst have hire to lady and to wyf,
For whom that I moste nedēs lese my lyf.
For, as by wey of possibilitee, 1291
Sith thou art at thy large, of prisoun free,
And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage,
Moore than is myn that sterve here in a
cage ;

For I moot wepe and waylē while I lyve,
With al the wo that prison may me yeve,
And eek with peyne that love me yeveth
also,

That doubleth al my torment and my wo.
Therwith the fyr of jalousie up-sterste
Withinne his brest, and hente him by the
herte 1300

So woody, that he lyk was to biholde

1278. Resoundēd, H⁶ resouneth.

The boxtree, or the asshen, dede and colde.

Thanne seyde he, 'O cruuel goddes that govérne

This world with byndyng of youre word eterne,

And writen in the table of atthamaunt
Your parlément and youre eterné graunt,
What is mankyndé moore unto you holde
Than is the sheepe that rouketh in the folde ? 1308

For slayn is man, right as another beest,
And dwelleth eek in prison and arreest,
And hath siknesse and greet adversitee,
And ofté tymès giltélees, *pardee*.

'What governance is in this prescience,
That giltélees tormenteth innocence ?
And yet encresseth this al my penaunce,
That man is bounden to his óbservaunce
For Goddés sake to letten of his wille,
Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfille ;
And whan a beest is dede he hath no peyne,
But after his deeth man moot wepe and pleyne, 1310

Though in this world he havé care and wo ;
Withouten douté it may stonden so.
The answer of this I lété to dyvynys,
But well I woot that in this world greet pync ys.

Allas ! I se a serpent or a theef,
That many a trewé man hath doon mescheef,

Goon at his large, and where hym list may turne ;

But I moot been in prisoun thurgh Saturne,
And eek thurgh Juno, jalous and eek wood,

That hath destroyéd wel ny al the blood 1330

Of Thebés, with his wasté wallés wyde ;
And Venus sleeth me on that oother syde
For jalousie and fere of hym Arcite.'

Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite
And lete hym in his prisoun stillé dwelle,
And of Arcite forth I wol yow telle.

1320. *But after his deeth man*, etc., so E⁴, throwing a stress, which accords well with the sense, on *his* ; H³ more smoothly, *But man after his deeth*, etc.

1323. *I lété*, E⁶ *lete I*, 'spoiling the accents throughout the line.

The sommer passeth, and the nyghtés longe

Encressen double wise the peynés stronge
Bothe of the lover and the prisoner. 1339
I noot which hath the wofuller mester ;
For shortly for to seyn this Palamoun
Perpetuelly is dampnéd to prisoun,
In cheynés and in fettres to been deed,
And Arcite is exiled upon his heed
For ever-mo, as out of that contree,
Ne never-mo, he shal his lady see.

Yow lovers axe I now this questioun,
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun ?
That oon may seen his lady day by day,
Bút in prison he moot dwelle alway ; 1350
That oother wher hym list may ride or go,
But seen his lady shal he never mo.
Now demeth as yow listé, ye that kan,
For I wol tellé forth as I bigan.

PART II

Whan that Arcite to Thebés comen was,
Ful ofte a dayheswelte and seyde, 'Allas !'
For seen his lady shal he never mo.
And, shortly to concluden al his wo,
So muché sorwe hadde never créature
That is, or shal, whil that the world may dure. 1360

His slepe, his mete, his drynke, is hym biraft,

That lene he wexe and drye as is a shaft ;
His eyen holwe, and grisly to biholde,
His hewé falow, and pale as asshen colde,
And solitarie he was and ever allone,
And waillynge al the nyght, makynge his mone :

And if he herdé song or instrument
Thanne wolde he wepe, he myghté nat be stent.

So feble eek were his spiritz and so lowe,
And chaungéd so that no man koudé knowe 1370

His speché nor his voys, though men it herde :

And in his geere for al the world he ferde,
Nat oonly like the loveris maladye

1337. *sommer*, E *sonne*.

1344. *upon his heed*, on pain of losing his head.

1362. *wexe*, E² *wexeth*.

Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye,
Engendred of humour malencolik,
Biforn, in his owne cellé fantastik.
And, shortly, turnéd was al up-so-doun
Bothe habit and eek disposicioun
Of hym, this woful love-re daun Arcite.

What sholde I al day of his wo endite?
Whan he enduréd hadde a yeer or two 1381
This cruel torment and this peyne and
woo,

At Thebés, in his contree, as I seyde,
Upon a nyght, in sleepe as he hym leyde,
Hym thoughte how that the wyngéd god
Mercúrie

Biforn hym stood and bad hym to be
murie;

His slepy yerle in hond he bar uprighte,
An hat he werede upon his heris brighte.
Arrayéd was this god, as he took keepe,
As he was whan that Argus took his sleepe,
And seyde hym thus, 'To Atthénés
shal thou wende; 1391

Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende.'
And with that word Arcité wook and
sterte,—

'Now trewely, how soore that me smerte,'
Quod he, 'to Atthénés right now wol I fare,
Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare,
To se my lady that I love and serve;
In hire presence I recche nat to sterve.'

And with that word he caughte a
greet mirour 1399

And saugh that chaungéd was al his colour
And saugh his visage al in another kynde;
And right anon it ran hym in his mynde,
That sith his face was so disfigured
Of maladye the which he hadde endured,
He myghte wel, if that he bar hym lowe,
Lyve in Atthénés evermore unknowe,
And seen his lady wel ny day by day.
And right anon he chaungéd his array
And cladde hym as a pouré laborer,

1374. *Hereos*, Eros, Love.

1376. *Biforn*, in his *owne celle fantastik*; in is from H only; *owne* from E² only. According to medieval theory Mania was begotten in the front cell of the head which was appropriated to the imagination.

1387. *yerle*, Mercury's *caduceus*.

1389. *he*, E I.

1390. *Argus*, the hundred-eyed guardian of Io. Mercury lulled him with music and slew him.

And al allone,—save oonly a squiér 1410
That knew his privetec and al his cas,
Which was disguised pourely as he was,—
To Atthénés is he goon the nexte way,
And to the court he wente upon a day,
And at the gate he proffeth his servyse
To drugge and drawe, what so men wol
devyse.

And, shortly of this matere for to seyn,
He fil in office with a chamberleyn
The which that dwellynge was with
Emelyc; 1419

For he was wys and koude soone espie
Of every servaunt which that serveth here.
Wel koude he hewen wode and water bere,
For he was yong, and myghty for the nones,
And therto he was long and big of bones,
To doon that any wight kan hym devyse.
A yeer or two he was in this servyse,
Page of the chambre of Emelyc the brighte,
And Philostrate he seyde that he highte.

But half so wel biloved a man as he 1429
Ne was ther never in court of his degree;
He was so gentil of his condicioun
That thurghoutal the court was his renoun.

They seyden that it were a charitee
That Theseus wolde enhauncen his degree,
And putten hym in worshipful servyse,
Ther as he myghte his vertu exercise.

And thus withinne a while his name is
spronge,

Bothe of his dedés and his goodé tonge,
That Theseus hath taken hym so neer,
That of his chambre he made hym a squiér,
And yaf him gold to mayntene his degree;
And eek men broghte hym out of his
contree,

From yeer to yeer, ful pryvely, his rente;
But honestly and slyly he it spent
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And thre yeer in this wise his lif he ladde
And bar hym so in pees, and eek in werre,
Ther was no man that Theseus hath derre.
And in this blisséd lete I now Arcite
And speke I wole of Palamon a lite. 1450

1424. *long*, EH³; Hengwrt4, *strong*.

1428. *Philostrate*: in the *Teseide* Arcite takes the name of Pentheo. The name Philostrate was probably suggested to Chaucer by Boccaccio's poem *Filistrato*, the original of *Troilus and Cressida*.

In derknesse and horrible and strong
prison

Thise seven yeer hath seten Palamon.
Forpyned, what for wo and for distresse.
Who feeleth double soor and hevynesse
But Palamon? that love destreyneth so
That wood out of his wit he goth for wo;
And cek ther-to he is a prisoner
Perpetuelly, noght only for a yer.

Who koudé ryme in Englyssh proprely
His martirdom? for sothe it am nat I;
Therefore I passe as lightly as I may. 1461

It fel that in the seventh yere, in May,
The thridde nyght, as oldé bookés seyn,
That al this storie tellen mooré pleyn,
Were it by áventure or destynce,—
As whan a thyng is shapen it shal be,—
That soone after the mydnyght, Palamoun,
By helpyng of a freend brak his prisoun
And fleeth the citee, faste as he may go,
For he hade yeve his gayler drynké so,
Of a clarrce, maad of a certeyn wyn, 1471
With narcotikes, and opie of Thebés fyn,
That al that nyght, thogh that men wolde
him shake,

The gayler sleepe, he myghté nat awake;
And thus he fleeth, as faste as ever
he may.

The nyght was short and fasté by the day,
That nedés-cost he moot hymselfen hyde,
And til a grové, fasté ther bisyde,
With dredeful foot, thanne stalketh Pala-
moun.

For, shortly, this was his opinioun, 1480
That in that grove he wolde hym hyde al
day,

And in the nyght thanne wolde he take
his way

To Thebés-ward, his freendés for to preye
On Theseus to helpe him to werreye;
And, shortly, outhér he woldé lese his lif,
Or wynnén Emelye unto his wyf.
This is theeffect and his contenté pleyn.

Now wol I turné to Arcite ageyn,
That litel wiste how ny that was his care,
Til that Fortúne had broght him in the
snare. 1490

1454. *soor*, E⁵; H², *sorwe*.

1472. *Thebes*, in Egypt, not in Greece.

1472. *wilk*, E of.

The bisy larké, messenger of day,
Salueth in hir song the morwé gray,
And fryr Phebus riseth up so brighte
That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,
And with his stremés dryeth in the greves
The silver dropés, hangyng on the leves.
And Arcita, that is in the court roial
With Theseus, his squier principal,
Is risen, and looketh on the myrie day;
And for to doon his óbservaunce to May,
Remembryng on the poynt of his desir,
He on a courser, stertyng as the fir,
Is riden into the feldés hym to pleye,
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye;
And to the grove of which that I yow tolde,
By áventure, his wey he gan to holde,
To maken hym a gerland of the greves,
Were it of wodébynde, or hawethorn leves,
And loude he song ageyn the sonnè shene:
' Máy, with alle thy floures and thy grene,
Wélcome be thou, fairé, fresshé May, 1511
In hope that I som grené geté may.'
And from his courser with a lusty herte
Into a grove ful hastily he sterte,
And in a path he rometh up and down,
Ther as by áventure this Palamoun
Was in a bussh, that no man myghte
hym se,

For soore aferéd of his deeth was he.
No-thing ne knew he that it was Arcite:
God woot he wolde have trowéd it ful lite;
But sooth is seyde, gon sithen many yeres,
That feeld hath eyen, and the wode hath
eres.

It is ful fair a man to bere hym evene,
For al day meeteth men at unset stevene.
Ful litel woot Arcite of his felawe
That was so ny to herknen al his sawe,
For in the bussh he sitteth now ful stille.

Whan that Arcite hadde roméd al his
fille,

And songen al the roundel lustily,
Into a studie he fil al sodeynly, 1530
As doon thes lovers in hir queynté
geres,—

Now in the cropé, now down in the breres,

1494. *That al the orient laugheth*: Dante, *l'urg.* i. 20, 'faceva tutto rider l'oriente.' (Skeat.)
1522. *That feeld hath eyen*: 'Campus habet lumen et habet nemus auris acumen.'

1524. *unset stevene*, unappointed time.

Now up, now down, as boket in a welle.
 Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,
 Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,
 Right so kan geery Venus overcaste
 The hertés of hir folk ; right as hir day
 Is gereful, right so chaungeth she array,—
 Selde is the Friday al the wowke y-like.

When that Arcite had songe, he gan
 to sike, 1540

And sette hym down withouten any moore :
 'Allas,' quod he, 'that day that I was
 bore !

How longé, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee,
 Woltow werreyen Thebés the citee ?
 Allas, y-brought is to confusioun
 The blood roial of Cadme and
 Amphion,—

Of Cadmus, which that was the firsté man
 That Thebés bulte, or first the toum bigan,
 And of the citee first was crouncd kyng.
 Of his lynage am I, and his ofspryng 1550
 By verray ligné, as of the stok roial ;
 And now I am so caytyf and so thral,
 That he that is my mortal enemy,
 I serve hym as his squier pourçly.

And yet dooth Juno me wel mooré shame,
 For I darnoght biknowemynowene name ;
 But ther as I was wont to highte Arcite,
 Now highte I Philostrate, noght worth a
 myte.

Allas, thou fellé Mars ! allas, Juno ! 1559
 Thus hath youre ire oure kynrede al fordo,
 Save oonly me, and wrecched Palamoun,
 That Theséus martireth in prisoun.
 And over al this, to sleen me outrely,
 Love hath his fryr dart so brennyngly
 Y-stikéd thurgh my trewé, careful herte,
 That shapen was my deeth erst than my
 sherte.

Ye sleen me with youre eyén, Emelye !
 Ye been the causé wherfore that I dye !
 Of al the remenant of myn oother care
 Ne sette I nat the montance of a tare,
 So that I koude doon aught to youre
 plesaunce.' 1571

And with that word he fil down in a trauce
 A longé tyme, and afterward up-sterete.

1536. *kan*, H⁴ *gan*.

i. sherte, shirt ; cp. *Legend of Good Women*, l. 2626, and *Troilus*, 734.

This Palamoun, that thoughte that
 thurgh his herte

He felte a coold swerd sodeynliché glyde,
 For ire he quook, no lenger wolde he byde.
 And whan that he had herd Arcitès tale,
 As he were wood, with facé deed and pale,
 He sturte hym up out of the buskés thikke,
 And seide, 'Arcité, falsé traytour wikke !
 Now artow hent, that lovest my lady so,
 For whom that I have al this peyne and wo,
 And art my blood, and to my conseil sworn,
 As I ful ofte have seyde thee heer-biforn,
 And hast byjapéd heere duc Theséus,
 And falsly chaungéd hast thy namé thus ;
 I wol be deed, or ellés thou shalt dye ;
 Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,
 But I wol love hire oonly, and namo ;
 For I am Palamon, thy mortal foo, 1590
 And though that I no wepene have in
 this place,
 But out of prison am astart by grace,
 I dredé noght that outhir thouw shalt dye,
 Or thouw ne shalt nat loven Emelye.
 Chees which thou wolt, for thou shalt
 nat astarte !'

This Arcité, with ful despitous herte,
 Whan he hym knew, and hadde his talé
 herd,

As fiers as leoun pulléd out his swerd,
 And seyde thus, 'By God that sit above,
 Nere it that thou art sik and wood for love,
 And eek that thouw no wepene hast in this
 place, 1601
 Thou sholdest never out of this grové pace,
 That thouw ne sholdest dyen of myn hond,
 For I desye the seurete and the bond
 Which that thouw seist that I have maad
 to thee.

What, verray fool, thyнк wel that love is fre !
 And I wol love hire mawgree al thy myght.
 But for as muche thou art a worthy knyght,
 And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille,
 Have heer my trouthe, tomorwe I wol
 nat faile, 1610

Withouté wityng of any oother wight,
 That heere I wol be founden as a knyght,
 And bryngen harneys right ynough for
 thee,—

1584. *seyd*, H⁵ *told*.

1595. *for*, E⁸ *or*. 1598. *his*, H⁵ *a*.

And chese the beste and leve the worst
for me,—

And mete and drynké this nyght wol I
brynge

Ynough for thee, and clothes for thy
beddyng; ;

And if so be that thou my lady wynne
And sle me in this wode ther I am inne,
Thou mayst wel have thy lady, as for me.'

This Palamon answerde, 'I graunte it
thee.' 1620

And thus they been departed til a-morwe,
Whan ech of hem had leyd his feith to
borwe.

O Cupide, out of allé charitee !

O regne, that wolt no felawe have with
thee !

Ful sooth is seyde that lové ne lordshipe
Wol noght, his thankcs, have no felawe-
shipe.

Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamoun !

Arcite is riden anon unto the toun,
And on the morwe, er it were dayés light,
Ful prively two harneys hath he dight, 1630
Bothe suffisaunt and meté to darreyne
The bataille in the feeld betwix hem
tweyne ;

And on his hors, allone as he was born,
He carieth al the harneys hym biforn :
And in the grove, at tyme and place y-set,
This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.
To chaungen gan the colour in hir face,
Right as the hunters, in the regne of
Trace,

That stondesth at the gappé with a spere,
Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,
And hereth hym come russhyng in the
greves, 1641

And breketh both bowés and the leves,
And thynketh, 'Heere cometh my
mortal enemy,

With-outé faille he moot be deed or I ;
For outhur I moot sleen hym at the gappe,
Or he moot sleen me, if that me
myshappe' :

So ferdén they in chaungyng of hir hewe,
As fer as everich of hem outhur knewe.

Ther nas no 'Good day,' ne no saluyng,

1637. To, H¹ tho.

But streight, withouten word or re-
hersyng, 1650

Everich of hem heelpé for to armen oother,
As frendly as he were his owene brother ;
And after that, with sharpé sperés stronge,
They foynen ech at oother wonder longe.
Thou myghtest wené that this Palamoun,
In his fightyng were a wood leoun,
And as a crueel tigre was Arcite :

As wildé borcs gonné they to smyte,
That frothen whit as foom for iré wood,—
Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood.

And in this wise I lete hem fightyng
dwelle, 1661

And forth I wole of Theséus yow telle.

The Destinee, ministré general,
That executeth in the world over al,
The purveiaunce that God hath seyn biforn,
So strong it is that, though the world had
sworn

The contrarie of a thyng by ye or nay,
Yet somtyme it shal fallen on a day
That falleth nat eft withinne a thousand
yeere.

For certainly oure appetitès heere, 1670
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
Al is this reuléd by the sighte above.

This mene I now by myghty Theséus,
That for to huntén is so desirús,
And namely at the greté hert in May,
That in his bed ther daweth hym no day
That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde
With hunte and horne, and houndés hym
bisyde.

For in his huntýng hath he swich delit,
That it is al his joye and appetit 1680
To been hymself the greté hertés bane,
For after Mars he serveth now Dyane.

Cleer was the day, as I have toold er
this,

And Theséus, with allé joye and blis,
With his Ypolita, the fairé queene,
And Emelyé, clothéd al in grene,
On huntýng be they riden roially ;
And to the grove, that stood ful fasté by,
In which ther was an hert, as men hym
tolde,

Duc Theséus the streighté way hath
holde; 1690

And to the launde he rideth hym ful
right,—

For thider was the hert wont have his
flight,—

And over a brook, and so forth in his weye.
This duc wol han a cours at hym, or tweye,
With houndes, swiche as that hym list
commaunde.

And whan this duc was come unto the
launde

Under the sonne he looketh, and anon,
He was war of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme, as it were borés
two. 1699

The brighté swerdés wenten to and fro
So hidously, that with the leesté strook
It seméd as it woldé fille an ook ;
But what they weré no thyng he ne woot.
This duc his courser with his sporés smoot,
And at a stert he was bitwix hem two,
And pulled out a swerd, and criðé, 'Hoo !
Namoore, up peyne of lesynge of youre
heed !

By myghty Mars, he shal anon be deed
That smyteth any strook, that I may seen.
But telleth me what mystiers men ye been,
That been so hardy for to fighten heere 1711
Withouten juge, or oother officere,
As it were in a lystés roially ?'

This Palamon answerd hastily
And seyde, 'Sire, what nedeth wordés mo ?
We have the deeth disserved bothé two.
Two woful wrecches been we, two caytyves,
That been encombred of oure owene lyves,
And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,
Ne yeve us neither mercy ne refuge, 1720
But sle me first, for seinté charitee,
But sle my felawe eek as wel as me ;
Or sle hym first, for though thou
knowest it lite,

This is thy mortal foo, this is Arcite,
That fro thy lond is banysshed on his heed,
For which he hath deserved to be deed ;
For this is he that cam unto thy gate
And seyde that he highté Philostrate ;
Thus hath he japéd thee ful many a yer,
And thou hast makéd hym thy chief
squiér ; 1730

And this is he that loveth Emelye ;
For sith the day is come that I shal dye,

I maké pleyntly my confessioun
That I am thilké woful Palamoun,
That hath thy prisoun broken wikkedly.
I am thy mortal foo, and it am I
That loveth so hooete Emelye the brighte
That I wol dyé present in hir sighte.
Therefore I axé deeth and my juwise ;
But sle my felawe in the samé wise, 1740
For bothe han we deserved to be slayn.'

This worthy duc answerde anon agayn,
And seyde, 'This is a short conclusioun :
Youre owene mouth, by youre confessioun,
Hath dampnéd yow, and I wol it recorde,
It nedeth noght to pyne yow with the
corde,

Ye shal be deed, by myghty Mars the
rede !'

The queene anon, for verray womman-
hede,

Gan for to wepe, and so dide Emelye,
And alle the ladyes in the compaignye.
Greet pitee was it, as it thoughte hem alle,
That ever swich a chauncé sholde falle,
For gentil men they were, of greet estaat,
And no thyng but for love was this
debaat,—

And saugh hir bloddy woundés, wyde and
soore,

And allé crieden, bothé lasse and moore,
'Have mercy, lord, upon us wommenalle !'
And on hir baré knees adoun they falle,
And wolde have kist his feet ther as he
stood,

Til at the laste aslakéd was his mood, 1760
For pitee renneith soone in gentil herte,
And though he first for irè quook and sterte,
He hath considered shortly, in a clause,
The trespass of hem bothe, and eek the
cause,

And although that his ire hir gilt accused,
Yet in his resoun he hem bothe excused,
And thus he thoughté wel, that every man
Wol helpe hymself in love, if that he kan,
And eek deliver hymself out of prisoun ;
And eek his herté hadde compassioun 1770
Of wommen, for they wepen ever in oon ;

*1746. to pyne yow with the corde, put you to
torture, i.e. to extract a confession.*

*1761. For pitee, etc. This beautiful line occurs
four times in Chaucer.*

And in his gentil herte he thoughte anon,
And softe unto hym-self he seyde, 'Fy
Upon a lord that wol have no mercy,
But been a leoun, bothe in word and dede,
To hem that been in répentance and drede,

As wel as to a proud despitous man
That wol maynteyné that he first bigan ;
That lord hath litel of discrecioun,
That in swich cas kan no divisoun, 1780
But weyeth pride and humblesse after oon.'
And shortly, whan his ire is thus agoon,
He gan to looken up with eyen lighte,
And spak thise samé wordés, al on highte.

'The god of love, a *benedicite*,
How myghty and how greet a lord is he !
Ageyns his myght ther gayneth none
obstacles,

He may be cleped a god for his myracles,
For he kan maken, at his owene gyse,
Of everich herte as that hym list divyse.

'Lo heere this Arcite, and this
Palamoun, 1791

That quytly weren out of my prisoun,
And myghte han lyved in Thebés roially,
And witen I am hir mortal enemy,
And that hir deth lith in my myght also,
And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,
Y-brought hem hyder, bothé for to dye.

Now looketh, is nat that an heigh folye ?

'Whó may been a fole, but if he love ?
Bihoold, for Goddés sake that sit above,
Se how they blede ! be they noght wel
arrayed ? 1801

Thus hath hir lord, the god of love, y-payed
Hir wages and hir fees for hir serveyse :
And yet they wenen for to been ful wyse
That serven love, for aught that may bifalle.
But this is yet the besté game of alle,
That she, for whom they han this jolitee,
Kan hem ther-fore as muché thank as me.
She woot namoore of al this hooté fare,
By God, than woot a cokkow or an hare.
But all moot ben assayéd, hoot and cold ;
A man moot ben a fool, or yong or oold,—
I woot it by myself ful yore agoon,

1799. *Who may*, etc., i.e. your lover is your only perfect fool. The reading of H, '*who may be a fole if that he love*,' necessitates the insertion of *not* after *may*.

For in my tyme a servant was I oon.

And therefore, syn I knowe of lovés payne,
And woot how soore it kan a mandistreyne,
As he that hath ben caught ofte in his laas,
I yow foryeve al hoolly this trespaas,
At rquête of the queene, that kneleth
heere,

And eek of Emelye, my suster deere. 1820
And ye shul Lothe anon unto me swere,
That never mo ye shal my contree dere,
Ne maké werre upon me, nyght ne day,
But been my freendés in al that ye may.
I yow foryeve this trespas every deel.'

And they him sworn his axying, faire
and weel,

And hym of lordshipe and of mercy preyde,
And he hem graunteth grace, and thus he
seyde :—

'To speke of roial lynage and richesse,
Though that she were a queene or a
princesse, 1830

Ech of you bothe is worthy, doutélees,
To wedden whan tyme is, but nathélees,—
I speke as for my suster Emelye,
For whom ye have this strif and jalouseye,—
Ye woot your self she may nat wedden two
At onés, though ye fighten evermo.
That oon of you, al be hym looth or lief,
He moot go pipen in an yvy leef :

This is to seyn, she may nought havé
bothe, 1839

Al be ye never so jalouse ne so wrothe ;
And for-thy, I yow putte in this degree,
That ech of yow shal have his destynée
As hym is shape, and herkneth in what
wyse ;

Lo, heere your ende of that I shal devyse.

'My wyl is this, for plat conclusioun
Withouten any repplacioun,—

If that you liketh, take it for the beste,—
That everich of you shal goon where
hym leste

Frely, withouten raunson or daunger ;
And this day fifty wykés, fer ne ner, 1850
Everich of you shal brynge an hundred
knyghtes

1838. *go*, om. E. The phrase, equivalent to our *go whistle*, is used by Wyclif.

1850. *fer ne ner*, no later or sooner ; *fifty wykes* are of course used here for a year, Boccaccio's *un anno intero*.

Arméd for lystés up at allé rightes,
 Al redy to darreyne hire by bataille ;
 And this bihote I yow with-outen faille
 Upon my trouthe and as I am a knyght,
 That wheither of yow bothé that hath
 myght,

This is to seyn, that wheither he or thow
 May with his hundred, as I spak of now,
 Sleen his contrarie, or out of lystès dryve,
 Him shal I yeve Emelya to wyve, 1860
 To whom that Fortune yeveth so fair a
 grace.

The lystés shal I maken in this place,
 And God so wisly on my soulé rewe
 As I shal evene jugé been, and trewe.
 Ye shul noon oother endé with me maken
 That oon of yow ne shal be deed or taken ;
 And if yow thynketh this is weel y-sayd,
 Seyeth youre avys and holdeth you apayd.
 This is youre ende and youre conclusioun.'

Who looketh lightly now but Pala-
 moun? 1870

Who spryngeth up for joyé but Arcite?
 Who kouthe tellé, or who kouthe endite,
 The joyé that is makéd in the place
 Whan Theseus hath doon so fair a grace?
 But doun on knees wente every maner
 wight

And thonken hym with al hir herte and
 myght ;

And namély the Thebans often sithe.
 And thus with good hope and with herté
 blithe

They taken hir leve, and homward gonne
 they ride 1879

To Thebés, with his oldé wallés wyde.

PART III

I trowe men woldé deme it negligence
 If I forgete to tellen the dispence
 Of Theseus, that gooth so bisily
 To maken up the lystés roially,
 That swich a noble theatre as it was
 I dar wel seyn that in this world there nas.
 The circuit a mylé was aboute,
 Walléd of stoon and dychéd al withoute.
 Round was the shape, in manere of
 compaas, 1889
 Ful of degrees, the heichte of sixty pas,

That whan a man was set on o degree,
 He letté nat his felawe for to see.

Estward therstood a gate of marbul whit,
 Westward right swich another in the
 opposit.

And, shortly to concluden, swich a place
 Was noon in erthe, as in so litel space ;
 For in the lond ther was no crafty man
 That géométrie or ars-metrik kan,
 Ne portreitour, ne kervere of ymáges,
 That Theseus ne yaf him mete and wages,
 The theatre for to maken and devyse. 1901
 And, for to doon his ryte and sacrificse,
 He estward hath, upon the gate above,
 In worshiþe of Venús, goddesse of love,
 Doon make an auter and an oratérie ;
 And westward, in the mynde and in
 mémorie

Of Mars, he makéd hath right swich
 another,

That costé largely of gold a fother.
 And northward, in a touret on the wal,
 Of alabastre whit and reed coral, 1910
 An oratorie riché for to see,
 In worshiþe of Dyane of chastitee
 Hath Theseus doon wrought in noble wyse.

But yet hadde I forgeten to devyse
 The noble kervyng and the portreitures,
 The shape, the contenance, and the
 figures

That weren in thise oratories thre.

First, in the temple of Venus maystow
 se, 1918

Wrought on the wal, ful pitous to biholde,
 The broken slepés, and the sikés colde,
 The sacred teiris, and the waymentyng,
 The fry strokés, and the desiryng,
 That lovés servauntz in this lyf enduren ;
 The othés that her covenantz assuren ;
 Plesaunce and Hope, Desir, Foolhardy-
 nesse,
 Beautee and Youthé, Bauderie, Richesse,
 Charmés and Force, Lesyngés, Flaterye,
 Dispensé, Bisynesse and Jalousye,
 That wered of yelewe goldés a gerland

1900. *him*, om. E³; H, *hem*.

1906. *And westward*, etc., text from H; and
on the westward in memorie, E³; and *on the*
westward side in memorie, Petworth.

1921. *sacred*, Cambridge MS. *secret*, an at-
 tractive reading.

And a cokkow sitynge on hir hand ; 1930
Féstes, instrumentz, carólès, daunces,
Lust and array, and alle the circum-
staunces

Of love, whiche that I reken, and rekne
shal,

By ordre weren peynted on the wal,
And mo than I kan make of mencion ;
For soothly al the mount of Citheroun,
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellynge,
Was shewed on the wal in portreyng,
With al the gardyn and the lustynesse.
Nat was forgotten the porter Ydelnesse,
Ne Narcisus the faire of yore agon, 1941
Ne yet the folye of kyng Salamon,
Ne yet the gretè strengthe of Ercules,
Thenchautementz of Medea and Circes,
Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage,
The richè Cresus, kaytyf in servage.
Thus may ye seen that Wysdom ne

Richesse,

Beautee ne Sleightè, Strengthè, Hardy-
nesse,

Ne may with Venus holdè champartie,
For as hir list the world than may she
gye. 1950

Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las
Til they for wo ful oft seyde, 'Allas !'
Suffiseth heere ensamples oon or two,
And though I koudè rekene a thousand mo.

The statue of Venus, glorious for to se,
Was naked, fetyng in the largè see,
And fro the navel doun al covered was
With wawès grene, and brighte as any
glas.

A citole in hir right hand haddè she,
And on hir heed, ful semely for to se, 1960
A rosè gerland, fressh and wel smellynge,
Above hir heed hir dowvès flikerynge.
Bifore hire stood hir sonè Cupido,
Upon his shuldrès wyngès hadde he two,
And blind he was, as it is often seene ;
Abowe he bar and arwès brighte and kene.

1933. *reken*, Cambridge MS.; E, *rekned* have; H⁶, *rekned*.

1936. *Citheroun*. Chaucer seems to confuse the island of *Cythera*, the home of Venus, with *Mt Citharon*, on the borders of Attica, sacred to Bacchus and the Muses.

1940. *the porter Ydelnesse*, cp. *Romaunt of the Rose*, ll. 531-593.

1951. *las*, snare; H, *trace*.

Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle
yow al

The portreiture that was upon the wal
Withinne the temple of myghty Mars the
rede?

Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and
brede, 1970

Lyk to the estrès of the grisly place
That highte the gretè temple of Mars in
Trace,

In thilkè coldè, frosty regioun
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.

First, on the wal was peynted a forest,
In which ther dwelleth neither man nor
best,

With knotty, knarry, bareyne treès olde
Of stubbès sharpe and hidouse to biholde,
In which ther ran a rumbel and a swough,
As though a storm sholde bresten every
bough; 1980

And dounward from an hille, under a
bente,

Ther stood the temple of Mars army-
potente,

Wroght al of burnèd steel, of which the
entree

Was long and streit, and gastly for to see ;
And ther out came a rage, and such a veze
That it made alle the gatès for to rese.

The northren lyght in at the dorès
shoon,—

For wyndowe on the wal ne was ther noon
Thurgh which men myghten any light
discerne,—

The dorès were al of adamant eterne, 1990
Y-clenchèd overthwart and endelong

With iren tough, and for to make it strong,
Every pylér, the temple to sustene,
Was tonnè greet, of iren bright and shene.

Ther saugh I first the derke ymaginyng
Of felonye, and al the compassyng ;
The cruell ire, reed as any gleede ;
The pyképur, and eke the palé drede ;

1972. *grete temple of Mars in Trace*, i.e. the temple under Mt. Hæmus, described by Statius in the seventh book of the *Thebaid*, lines 40-63. Statius here served as a model to Boccaccio.

1979. *rumbel*, H *swymbel*, moaning (of wind).

1986. *gates*, E³ *gate*.

1990. *dorès were*, E³ *dore was*.

1998. *pyképur*. The pickpurse is not mentioned in Boccaccio. Wright explains it to refer to the

The smylere, with the knyfe under the cloke ;

The shepnè, brennyng with the blakè smoke ; ²⁰⁰⁰

The tresoun of the mordrynge in the bedde ;

The open werre, with woundès al biledde ;

Contek, with blodý knyf, and sharpe manace ;

Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.

The sleere of hymself yet saugh I ther,
His hertè blood hath bathéd al his heer ;
The nayl y-dryven in the shode a-nyght ;
The coldè deeth, with mouth gapyng up-right.

Amyddès of the temple sat Meschaunce,
With disconfort and sory contenance.

Yet saugh I Woodnesse, laughyng in his rage, ²⁰¹¹

Arméd compleint, out-hees, and fiers outrage,

The careyne, in the busk, with throte y-curve,

A thousand slayn and nat of qualm y-storve ;

The tiraunt, with the pray by force y-raft ;
The toun destroyéd, ther was nothyng laft.

Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppestères ;

The huntè strangled with the wildè beres ;
The sowè freten the child right in the cradel ; ²⁰¹⁹

The cook y-scalded, for al his longè ladcl.

Noight was forgeten by the infortune of Marte,

The cartere over-ryden with his carte ;
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.

riffers of the dead after a battle. But in Wright's own quotation from the *Compost of Ptolomeus* it is said, 'Under Mars is borne *thieves* and *robbers* that kepe hye wayes.'

2009. *Meschaunce*. Statius 'virtus tristissima.'

2012. *Arméd compleint*. Statius has 'Mors armata.'

2014. *and nat, E and nat oon*, a good reading if we omit *and*.

2017. *the shippes hoppeteres*, the dancing ships. Chaucer is translating *Teseide*, vii. 37, 'Vedeui ancor le navi bellatrici,' and probably read the last word 'ballatrici' in error.

2018. *hunte*, hunter. H ends the line 'with wilde bores corage' to rhyme with 'rage' in 2011, omitting all between.

Ther were also of Martes divisoun,
The barbour and the bocher, and the smyth
That forgeth sharpe swerdès on his styth ;
And al above, depeynted in a tour,

Saugh I Conquést sittynge in greet honour
With the sharpe swerd over his heed
Hángynge by a soutil twynès threed. ²⁰³⁰

Depeynted was the slaughtre of Julius,
Of grete Nero, and of Antonius,—

Al be that thilkè tyme they were unborn,
Yet was hir deth depeynted ther-biforn
By manasyng of Mars, right by figure,
So it was shewéd in that portreiture
As is depeynted in the sterres above
Who shal be slayn or ellès deed for love ;
Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde, ²⁰³⁹
I may nat rekene hem allè though I wolde.

The statue of Mars upon a cartè stood,
Arméd, and lookéd grym as he were wood,
And over his heed ther shynen two figures
Of sterres that been clepéd in scriptures,
That oon Puella, that oother Rubeus.

This god of armès was arrayéd thus :
A wolf ther stood biforn hym at his feet
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet.
With soutil pencil depeynted was this storie ²⁰⁴⁹

In rédoutynge of Mars and of his glorie.

Now to the temple of Dyane the chaste,
As shortly as I kan, I wol me haste

To tellè yow al the descripcioun.
Depeynted been the wallès up and doun
Of huntynge and of shamefast chastitee.

Ther saugh I how woful Calistopee,
Whan that Diane agrevéd was with here,
Was turnéd from a womman to a bere,
And after was she maad the loodè-sterre ;
Thus was it peynted, I kan sey yow no ferre. ²⁰⁶⁰

Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may see.

2025. *barbour*, i.e. barber-surgeon. In Wright's extract from the *Compost of Ptolomeus* it is said, 'These men of Mars . . . wyll be gladly Smythes or workers of iron . . . good to be a barboure and a blode letter and to drawe tethe.'

2037. *sterres*, E⁶ *sertres* or *certres*.

2045. *Puella*. 'Signifieth Mars retrograde and Rubeus, Mars direct' (Speght).

2049. *depeynted was*, E⁶ *was depeynted*.

2056. *Calistopee*, i.e. the Arcadian nymph Callisto.

2061. *eek a sterre*, the constellation Boötes.

Ther saugh I Dane, y-turned til a tree,--
I mené nat the goddessé Diane,
But Penneus doughter which that highté
Dane.

Ther saugh I Attheon an hert y-maked,
For vengeance that he saugh Diane al
naked ;

I saugh how that his houndés have hym
caught

And freeten hym, for that they knewe
hym naught.

Yet peynted was a litel forther moor
How Atthalante hunted the wildé boor,
And Meleagre, and many another mo,
For which Dyané wroghte hym care and
wo.

Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
The whiche me list nat drawn to mémorie.

This goddessé on an hert ful hyé seet,
With smale houndés al aboute hir feet,
And undernethe hir feet she hadde a
moone,

Wexynge it was, and sholdé wanye soone.
In gaudé grene hir statue clothéd was,
With bowe in honde and arwés in a cas ;
Hir eyen casté she ful lowe adoun 2081
Ther Pluto hath his derké regioun.

A womman travayllynge was hire biforn,
But, for hir child so longe was unborn,
Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle
And seyde, 'Helpe, for thou mayst best
of alle.'

Wel koude he peynten lifly, that it wroghte ;
With many a floryn he the hewés boghte.

Now been the lystés maad, and Theséus,
That at his greté cost arrayéd thus 2090
The templés, and the theatre every deel,
Whan it was doon hym lykéd wonderweel ;
But stynte I wole of Theséus a lite,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.

The day approacheth of hir retournynge,
That everich sholde an hundred knyghtés
brynge,
The bataille to dareyne, as I yow tolde,

2062. *Dane*, i.e. *Daphne*.

2065. *Attheon*, *Actæon*.

2070. *Atthalante*, *Atalanta*.

2072. *hym*, *H hem*.

2085. *Lucyna*, the name of Diana as helper of women in labour.

2089. *the*, *H⁸ thise*.

And til Atthenes, hir covenantz for to
holde,

Hath everich of hem broght an hundred
knyghtes 2099

Wel arméd for the werre at allé rightes ;
And sikerly ther trowéd many a man
That never, sithen that the world bigan,
As for to speke of knyghthod of hir hond,
As fer as God hath makéd see or lond,
Nas, of so fewe, so noble a compaignye ;
For every wight that lovéd chivalrye
And wolde, his thankés, han a passant
name,

Hath preyéd that he myghte been of that
game ;

And wel was hym that ther-to chosen was ;
For if ther fille tomorwé swich a caas, 2110
Ye knowen wel that every lusty knyght
That loveth paramours, and hath his
myght,

Were it in Engélond or ellés-where,
They wolde, hir thankés, wilnen to be
there.

To fighté for a lady,-- *benedicitee* !

It were a lusty sighté for to see.

And right so ferden they with Palamon.
With hym ther wenten knyghtés many
oon ;

Som wol ben arméd in an haubergeoun,
In a bristplate and in a light gypoun ;
And somme woln have a pairé platés
large ; 2121

And somme woln have a Puce sheeld or
a targe ;

Somme woln ben arméd on hir leggés weel,
And have an ax, and somme a mace of
steel ;

Ther is no newé gyse that it nas old.
Arméd were they, as I have yow told,
Everych after his opinion.

Ther maistow seen comynge with
Palamon

Lygurge hymself, the greté kyng of Trace ;
Blak was his berd, and manly was his
face ; 2130

The cercles of his eyen in his heed,
They glowédén bitwixen yelow and reed ;
And lik a grifphon lookéd he aboute,

2129. *Lygurge*, *Lycurgus*. In the *Teseide* he fights on Arcite's side.

With kempé heeris on his browès stoute ;
His lymés grete, his brawnés harde and
stronge,

His shuldrés brode, his armés rounde
and longe,

And, as the gysé was in his contree,
Ful hye upon a chaar of gold stood he,
With fouré whité bolés in the trays.

In stede of cote-armure, over his
harnays 2140

With naylés yelewe, and brighte as any
gold,

He hadde a berés skyn, col-blak, for-old.
His longé heer was kembd bihynde his
bak ;

As any ravenes fethere it shoon for-blak ;
A wrethe of gold, arm-greet, of hugé
wighte,

Upon his heed, set ful of stonés brighte,
Of fyné rubyés and of dyamauntz ;

Aboute his chaar ther wenten white
alauntz,

Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,
To huntén at the leoun or the deer ; 2150

And folwéd hym with mosel faste
y-bounde,

Colered of gold and tourettes fyléd rounde.
An hundred lordés hadde he in his route,
Arméd ful wel, with hertés stierne and
stoute.

With Arcita, in stories as men fynde,
The grete Emetréus, the kyng of Inde,
Upon a steedé bay, trappéd in steel,
Covered in clooth of gold, dyapred weel,
Cam ridyng, lyk the god of armés, Mars.
His cote armuréd was of clooth of Tars
Couchéd with perlés, white and rounde
and grete ; 2161

His sadel was of brend gold, newe y-bete ;
A mantelet upon his shulder hangyng,
Brat-ful of rubyés rede, as fyr sparklyng ;
His crispé heer, lyk ryngés was y-ronne,
And that was yelow, and glytered as the
sonne.

His nose was heigh, his eyen bright citryn ;
His lippés rounde, his colour was
sangwyn ;

2160. *clooth of Tars, i.e. Tartary, Chinese
stuffs which passed through Tartary on their
way to Europe.*

A fewé frakenes in his face y-spreyné¹,
Bitwixen yelowand somdel blak y-mey²nd,
And as a leoun he his lookyng caste. 2171
Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I cas te ;
His berd was wel bigonné for to spryn³ge ;
His voys was as a trompé thondryngé ;
Upon his heed he wered, of laurer grer³ie,
A gerland, fressh and lusty for to sene.³
Upon his hand he bar, for his deduyt,
An egle tame, as any lilye whyt.

An hundred lordés hadde he with hyn.
there,

Al arméd, save hir heddes, in al hir gere,
Ful richély in allé maner thynges ; 2181
For trusteth wel that dukés, erlés, kynges,
Were gadered in this noble compaignye,
For love and for encrees of chivalrye.
Aboute this kyng ther ran on every part
Ful many a tame leoun and leopard.

And in this wise these lordés, alle and
some,

Been on the Sunday to the citee come
Abouté pryme, and in the toun alight.

This Thescus, this duc, this worthy
knyght, 2190

Whan he had broght hem into his citee
And innéd hem, everich in his degree,
He festeth hem, and dooth so greet labour
To esen hem, and doon hem al honóur,
That yet men weneth that no mannés
wit

Of noon estaat ne koude amenden it.

The mynstralcy, the service at the
feeste,

The greté yiftes to the mceste and lceste,
The riche array of Thescus paleys,
Ne who sat first, ne last, upon the deys,
What ladyés fairest been, or best daun-
syng, 2201

Or which of hem kan dauncen best and
syng,

Ne who moost felyngly speketh of love ;
What haukés sitten on the perche above,
What houndés ligen in the floor adoun,—
Of al this make I now no mencion,
But al theffect, that thynketh me the beste ;

2177. *deduyt*, delight ; H² *delit*.

2188. *the Sunday, i.e. the 'this day fifty
wykes' from the Saturday May 5th in which
Palamon and Arcite first fought (see l. 1850).*

2207. *al, H of, perhaps rightly.*

Now cometh the point, and herkneth if
yow leste.

The Sondag nyght, er day bigan to
sprynge, 2209

Whan Palamon the larké herdé synge,
Al though it nere nat day by hours two,
Yet song the larke, and Palamon also.
With hooly herte and with an heigh corage,
He roos to wenden on his pilgrymage
Unto the blisful Citherea benigne,—
I mené Venus, honourable and digne,—
And in hir houre he walketh forth a paas
Unto the lystés, ther hire temple was,
And doun he kneleth with ful humble cheer
And herté soor, and seyde in this
manere :— 2220

‘ Faireste of faire, o lady myn, Venus,
Doughter to Jove, and spouse of Vulcanus,
Thow glidere of the mount of Citheron,
For thilké love thow haddest to Adoon,
Have pitee of my bittré tceris smerte,
And taak myn humble preyere at thyn
herte.

Allas ! I ne havé no langage to telle
Theffectés ne the tormentz of myn helle ;
Myn herté may nyne harmés nat biweye ;
I am so cónfus that I kan noght seye. 2230
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest weele
My thought, and seest what harmés that
I fele,

Considere al this and rewe upon my soore
As wisly as I shal for evermoore,
Emforth my myght, thy trewé servant be,
And holden werre alwey with chastitee ;
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.
I kepé noght of armés for to yelpe.
Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to have victóric,
Ne rénoun in this cas, ne veyné glorie 2240
Of pris of armés, blownen up and doun,
But I wolde have fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse.

2217. in hir houre. The first hour of each day
belonged to that one of the seven deities, Saturn,
Jupiter, Mars, Sol, Venus, Mercury, Luna, to
whom the day was dedicated : the second to the
next on the list, the third to the next, and so on.
Sunday being dedicated to Sol, Venus would
preside over the second, ninth, sixteenth and
twenty-third hours, the last of which would begin
two hours before day-break on Monday.

2219. with ful, H⁶ and with.

*2220. and seyde in this manere, H⁶ he seide as
ye shal here.*

Fynd thow the manere how, and in what
wyse ;

I recché nat, but it may bettre be,
To have victorie of hem, or they of me,
So that I have my lady in myne armes,
For though so be that Mars is god of
armes,

Youre vertu is so greet in hevene above
That, if yow list, I shal wel have my love.
Thy temple wol I worshiþe evermo, 2251
And on thyn auter, wher I ride or go,
I wol doon sacrifice and firés beete ;
And if ye wol nat so, my lady sweete,
Thanne preye I thee, tomorwe with a spere
That Arcita me thurgh the herté bere ;
Thanne rekke I noght, whan I have lost
my lyf,

Though that Arcita wyne hire to his wyf :
This is theeffect and ende of my preyère,—
Yif me my love, thow blisful lady deere.’

Whan the orison was doon of Palamon,
His sacrifice he hide, and that anon,
Ful pitously with allé circumstaunces,
Al telle I noght as now his observaunces ;
But atté laste the statue of Venus shook
And made a signé, wher-by that he took
That his preyère accepted was that day ;
For thogh the signé shewéd a delay,
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his
boone,

And with glad herte he wente hym hoom
ful soone. 2270

The thridde houre in - equal that
Palamon

Bigan to Venus temple for to gon,
Up roos the sonne and up roos Emelye,
And to the temple of Dyane gan she hye.
Hir maydens, that she thider with hire
ladde,

Ful redily with hem the fyr they hadde,
Thencens, the clothés, and the remenant al
That to the sacrific longen shal,
The hornés fulle of meeth, as was the
gysc,— 2279

2271. The thridde houre in-equal, three hours
after ‘two hours before sunrise,’ i.e. the first
hour on Monday, that dedicated to Luna or
Diana : *in-equal* shows that the reckoning is by
planetary hours, which vary with the length of
the day.

2274. she, om. E⁶.

Ther lakkéd noght to doon hir sacrificise.
Smokynge the temple, ful of cloþes faire,

This Emelye, with herté debonaire,
Hir body wessh with water of a welle;
But how she dide hir ryte I dar nat telle,
But it be any thing in general;
And yet it were a game to heeren al;
To hym that meneth wel it were no charge,
But it is good a man been at his large.

Hir brighté heer was kempl, un-
tresséd al,

A coroune of a grene ook cerial ²²⁹⁰
Upon hir heed was set, ful faire and meete;
Two fyrés on the auter gan she beete,
And dide hir thyngés, as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebés, and thise bookés olde.
Whan kyndled was the fyr, with pitous
cheere,

Unto Dyane she spak as ye may heere :

‘O chasté goddesse of the wodés grene,
To whom bothe hevene and erthe and
see is sene,

Queene of the regne of Pluto, derk and
lowe,

Goddess of maydens, that myn herte hast
knowe ²³⁰⁰

Ful many a yeer, and woost what I desire,
As keepe me fro thy vengeaunce and
thyn ire,

That Attheon aboughté cruelly;
Chasté goddessé, wel wostow that I
Desire to ben a mayden al my lyf,
Ne never wol I be no love, ne wyf.

I am, thow woost, yet of thy compaignye,
A mayde, and love huntynge and venerye,
And for to walken in the wodés wilde,
And noght to ben a wyf and be with childe;
Noght wol I knowe the compaignye of man.
Now helpe me, lady, sith ye may and kan,
For tho thre formes that thou hast in thee.
And Palamon, that hath swich love to me,
And eek Arcite, that loveth me so soore,

^{2290.} *grene ook cerial*, Boccaccio's ‘*quercia cereale*,’ the holm oak.

^{2294.} *In Stace of Thebes*, i.e. the *Thebais* of Statius, where, however, no description of these observances occurs.

^{2303.} *Attheon*, Actæon.

^{2313.} *tho thre formes*. Diana, a ‘*diva triformis*,’ was known as Luna in heaven, Diana or Lucina on earth, and Proserpina in hell.

This grace I preyé thee withouté moore;
As sendé love and pees bitwixe hem two,
And fro me turne away hir hertés so
That al hire hooté love and hir desir,
And al hir bisy torment and hir fir, ²³²⁰
Be queynt, or turnéd in another place.
And if so be thou wolt do me no grace,
Or if my destynce be shapen so
That I shal nedés have oon of hem two,
As sende me hym that moost desireth me.
Bihoold, goddesse of clené chastitee,
The bittré teeres that on my chekés falle.
Syn thou art mayde, and kepere of us alle,
My maydenhede thou kepe and wel
conserve ²³²⁹

And whil I lyve a mayde I wol thee serve.’

The firés brenne upon the auter cleere
Whil Emelye was thus in hir preyére,
But sodelynly she saugh a sighté queynte,
For right anon oon of the fyrés queynte,
And quyked agayn, and after that, anon
That oother fyr was queynt and al agon,
And as it queynte it made a whistelynge,
As doon thise weté brondes in hir
brennyng;

And at the brondés ende out-ran anon
As it were bloody dropés, many oon; ²³⁴⁰
For which so soore agast was Emelye
That she was wel ny mad, and gan to crye,
For she ne wisté what it signyfyed,
But oonly for the feere thus hath she cried,
And weep that it was pitee for to heere;
And ther-with-al Dyané gan appeere,
With bowe in honde, right as an hunteresse,
And seyde, ‘Doghter, stynt thyn hevynesse.

Among the goddés hye it is affermed, ²³⁴⁹
And by eterné word written and confermed,
Thou shalt ben wedded unto oon of tho
That han for thee so muchel care and wo,
But unto which of hem I may nat telle.
Farwel, for I ne may no lenger dwelle.
The firés whiche that on myn auter brenne
Shulle thee declaren, er that thou go
henné,

Thyn aventure of love, as in this cas.’
And with that word the arwés in the caas
Of the goddessé clateren faste and ryngé,

^{2338.} *brondes*, brands; H, as doth a wete brond in his brennyng.

And forth she wente and made a
vanysshynge, 2360

For which this Emelye astonéd was,
And seyde, 'What amounteth this, allas !
I putté me in thy proteccioun,
Dyane, and in thy disposicioun.'

And hoom she goth anon the nexté weye.
This is the effect, ther is namoore to seye.

The nexté houre of Mars folwynge this,
Arcite unto the temple walkéd is
Of fiersé Mars, to doon his sacrificise 2369
With alle the rytés of his payen weye.
With pitous herte and heigh devocioun
Right thus to Mars he seyde his
orisoun :—

'O strongé god, that in the regnès colde
Of Trace honoured art and lord y-holde,
And hast in every regne and every lond
Of armés al the brydel in thyn hond,
And hem fortúnest as thee lyst devyse,
Accepte of me my pitous sacrificise.
If so be that my youthé may deserve,
And that my myght be worthy for to serve
Thy godhede, that I may been oon of
thync, 2381

Thanne preye I thee to rewé upon my pyne.
For thilké payne, and thilké hooté fir,
In which thou whilom brendest for desir,
Whan that thou usedeste the béautee
Of fairé, yongé, fresshé Venus free,
And haddest hire in armés at thy wille,
Al-though thee onés on a tyme mysfille,
Whan Vulcanus hadde caught thee in
his las, 2389

And foonde thee liggyng by his wyf, allas !
For thilké sorwé that was in thyn herte,
I have routheas wel upon my peynés smerte.
I am yong and unkonnyng, as thou woost,
And, as I trowe, with love offended moost
That ever was any lyvés creature ;
For she that dooth me al this wo endure
Ne reccheth never wher I synke or fleete.
And wel I woot, er she me mercy heete,
I moot with strengthé wyne hire in the
place ; 2399

And wel I woot withouten helpe or grace
Of thee, ne may my strengthé noght availle.

2367. *The nexte houre of Mars*, the fourth
hour of the day.

2369. *Of fiersé Mars*, *H To fyry Mars*.

Thanne helpe me, lord, tomorwe in my
bataille,

For thilké fyr that whilom brenté thee,
As well as thilké fyr now brenneth me,
And do that I tomorwe have victorie.

Myn be the travaille, and thyn be the
glorie !

Thy sovereyn temple wol I moost
honouren

Of any place, and alwey moost labouren
In thy plessaunce, and in thy craftés
stronge ; 2409

And in thy temple I wol my baner honge,
And alle the armés of my compaignye,
And ever mo, un-to that day I dye,
Eterné fir I wol biforn thee fynde :

And eek to this avow I wol me bynde.
My beerd, myn heer, that hongeth long
adoun,

That never yet ne felte offensioun
Of rasour nor of shere, I wol thee yive,
And ben thy trewé servant whil I lyve.
Now, lord, have routhe upon my sorwés
soore, 2419

Yif me the victorie, I aske thee namoore !'

The preyere stynt of Arcita the stronge,
The ryngés on the temple dore that honge,
And eek the dorés, clatereden ful faste,
Of which Arcita som-what hym agaste.
The fyres brenden upon the auter brighte,
That it gan al the temple for to lighte ;
And sweeté smel the ground anon up yaf,
And Arcita anon his hand up-haf,
And moore encens into the fyr he caste,
With othere rytés mo, and atté last 2430
The statue of Mars bigan his hauberk
rynge ;

And with that soun he herde a mur-
muryng

Ful lowe and dym, and seyde thus :
'Victorie !'

For which he yaf to Mars honour and
glorie.

And thus with joye and hopé wel to fare,
Arcite anon unto his inne is fare,
As fayn as fowel is of the brighté sonne.

And right anon swich strif ther is
bigonne

For thilké grauntyng in the hevene above,
Bitwixé Venus, the goddesse of love, 2440

And Mars, the stierné god armypotenté,
That Juppiter was bisy it to stente;
Til that the palé Saturnus the colde,
That knew so manye of adventures olde,
Foond in his olde experience an art
That he ful soone hath pleséd every part.
As sooth is seyde, elde hath greet avantáge;
In elde is bothé wysdom and uságe;
Men may the olde at-renne and noght
at-rede. 2449

Saturne anon, to stynten strif and drede,
Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,
Of al this strif he gan remédie fynde.

‘My deeré doghter Venus,’ quod
Saturne,

‘My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,
Hath mooré power than woot any man;
Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan,
Myn is the prison in the derké cote,
Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by
the throte,

The murmure and the cherlés rébellyng,
The groynyng and the pryvee empy-
sonyng; 2460

I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun
Whil I dwelle in signe of the leoun;
Myn is the ruyné of the hyé halles,
The fallynge of the toures and of the
walles,

Upon the mynour or the carpenter,—
I slow Sainpsoun, in shakynge the pilei, —
And myné be the maladyés colde,
The derké tresons and the castés olde;
My lookyng is the fader of pestilence;
Now weepe namoore, I shal doon dili-
gence 2470

That Palamon, that is thyn owene knyght,
Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.
Though Mars shal helpe his knyght, yet
nathéles,

2445. *an*, F² *and*.

2449. The line is a proverb.

2454. *My cours*. The reference is to the supposed malign influence of the planet Saturn: for its ‘width’ Wright quotes the *Compost of Ptolomeus*, which gives Saturn an orbit of more than thirty years.

2459. *cherles rebellyng*. Possibly Chaucer had in his mind ‘he Jacke Strawe and his meynce’; cp. Group B, l. 4584.

2462. *in signe of the leoun*. Prof. Skeat notes that the first ten degrees of the sign *Leo* are called the ‘face of Saturn.’

Bitwixé yow ther moot be som tyme pees
Al be ye noght of o compleccioun,
That causeth al day swich divisioun.
I am thyn aiel, redy at thy wille;
Weepe now namoore, I wol thy lust
fulfille.’

Now wol I stynten of the goddes above,
Of Mars, and of Venús, goddesse of love,
And tellé yow, as pleynly as I kan, 2481
The grete effect for which that I bygan.

PART IV

Greet was the feeste in Atthenés that
day,

And eek the lusty seson of that May
Made every wight to been in such
plesaunce,

That al that Monday justen they and
daunce,

And spenten it in Venus heigh servyse;
But, by the causé that they sholdé ryse
Éerly, for to seen the greté fight,
Unto hir resté wenten they at nyght. 2490
And on the morwé, whan that day gan
sprynge,

Of hors and harneys noyse and claterynge
Ther was in hostelryés al aboute,
And to the paleys rood ther many a route
Of lordés, upon steedés and palfreys.
Ther maystow seen divisynge of harneys
So unkouth and so riche, and wrought so
weel

Of goldsmythrye, of browdyng, and of
steel,

The sheeldés brighte, testerés, and
trappures;

Gold-hewen helmés, hauberkes, cote
armúres; 2500

Lordés in paramentz on hir courseres;
Knyghtés of retenue, and eek squieres,
Nailyngethesperes, and helmés bokélyng,
Giggynge of sheeldés, with layneres
lacyng;

There, as nede is, they weren no thyng
ydel.

The fomy steedés on the golden brydel
Gnawynge, and faste the armurers also,

2500. *Gold-heaven*, H *Gold-beten*.

With fyle and hamer, prikyng to and fro ;
 Yemen on foote, and communes many oon
 With shortè stavès, thikke as they may
 goon ; 2510

Pýpès, trompès, nakers, clariounes,
 That in the bataille blowen bloody sounes ;
 The paleys ful of peplès up and down,—
 Heere thre, ther ten, holdyng hir
 questioun,

Dyvynynge of thise Thebane knyghtès two.
 Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal
 be so,

Somme helden with hym with the blakè
 berd,

Somme with the balled, somme with the
 thikkè herd,

Some seyde he lookèd grymme and he
 wolde fighte,

He hath a sparth of twenty pound of
 wighte,— 2520

Thus was the hallè ful of divynynge
 Longe after that the sonnè gan to sprynge.

The gretè Theseus, that of his sleepe
 awakèd

With mynstralcie and noysè that was
 makèd,

Heeld yet the chambre of his paleys riche,
 Til that the Thebane knyghtès, bothe y-
 liche

Honored, were into the paleys fet.

Duc Thesèus was at a wyndow set,
 Arrayed right as he were a god in trone.

The peple precesseth thiderward ful soone
 Hym for to seen, and doon heigh
 reverence, 2531

And eek to herkne his heste and his
 sentence.

An heraud on a scaffold made an 'Ho !'
 Til al the noyse of peple was y-do ;
 And whan he saugh the peple of noyse
 al stille

Tho shewèd he the myghty dukès wille.

'The lord hath of his heið discrecioun
 Considered that it were destruccioun

To gentil blood to fighten in the gyse 2539

Of mortal bataille now in this emprise ;
 Wherefore, to shapen that they shal nat dye,

He wolde his firstè purpos modifye.

'No man ther-fore, up peyne of los of
 lyf,

No maner shot, ne polax, ne shorte knyf,
 Into the lystès sende, ne thider bryng ;
 Ne short swerd, for to stoke with poynt
 bitynge,

No man ne drawe, ne berè by his syde.
 Ne no man shal unto his felawe ryde
 But o cours with a sharpe y-groundè spere ;
 Foyne, if hym list, on foote, hym self to
 were. 2550

And he that is at meschief shal be take,
 And noght slayn, but be broght unto the
 stake

Thát shal ben ordeyned on either syde ;
 But thider he shal by force, and there
 abyde.

'And if so falle the chieftayn be take
 On outhir syde, or ellès sleen his make,
 No lenger shal the turneyngè laste.
 God spedè you ! gooth forth, and ley on
 faste !

With long swerd and with maces fighteth
 youre fille.

Gooth now youre wey, this is the lordès
 will.' 2560

The voys of peple touchèd the hevene,
 So loudè cridè they, with murie stevene,
 'God savè swich a lord, that is so good,
 He wilneth no destruccioun of blood !'

Up goon the trompès and the melodye
 And to the lystès rit the compaignye
 By ordinance, thurgh-out the citee large,
 Hangèd with clooth of gold, and nat
 with sarge.

Ful lik a lord this noble duc gan ryde,
 Thisè two Thebanès upon either side ; 2570

And after rood the queene and Emelye,
 And after that another compaignye

Of oon and oother, after hir degre ;
 And thus they passen thurgh-out the citee,
 And to the lystès comè they by tyme.

It nas not of the day yet fully pryme
 Whan set was Thesèus ful riche and hye,

Ypolita the queene and Emelye,
 And othere ladys in degrees aboute.

Unto the seettès precesseth al the route,
 And westward, thurgh the gatès under

Marte, 2581

Arcite, and eek the hondred of his parte,
 With baner reed is entred right anon.

2555. *chieftayn, cheventain* H³.

And in that selvè moment Palamon
Is under Venus, estward in the place,
With baner whyt, and hardy chiere and
face.

In al the world to seken up and doun
So evenc, withouten variacioun,
Ther nerè swichè compaignyès tweye;
For ther was noon so wys that kould seye
That any hadde of oother avauntage ²⁵⁹¹
Of worthynesse, ne of estaat, ne age,
So evenc were they chosen, for to gesse;
And in two renges fairè they hem dresse.

Whan that hir namès rad were
everichon,
That in hir nombrè gylc were ther noon,
Tho were the gatès shet, and cried was
loude,

‘Do now youre devoir, yongè knyghtès
proude!’

The heraudes lefte hir prikyng up and
doun; ²⁵⁹⁹

Now ryngen trompès loude and clarioun;
Ther is namoore to seyn, but west and est
In goon the speres ful sadly in arrest;
In gooth the sharpè spore into the syde.

Ther seen men who kan juste and who
kan ryde;

Ther shyveren shaftès upon sheeldès
thikke;

He feeleth thurgh the hertè-spoon the
prikke.

Up spryngen sperès twenty foot on highte;
Out gooth the swerdès as the silver
bryghte;

The helmès they to-hewen and to-shrede,
Out brest the blood with stiernè stremès
rede; ²⁶¹⁰

With myghty maces the bonès they to-
breste.

He, thurgh the thikkeste of the throng
gan threste,

Ther, stomblen steedès stronge, and doun
gooth al;

He, rolleth under foot as dooth a bal;

He, foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,
And he hym hurtleth with his hors adoun;

He, thurgh the body is hurt and sithen
y-take,

Maugree his heed, and broght unto the
stake,

Asforward was, right ther he moste abyde.
Another lad is on that oother syde. ²⁶²⁰
And som tyme dooth hem Theseüs to
reste,

Hem to refresshe and drynken, if hem leste.
Ful ofte a-day han thise Thebanès two,
Togydre y-met and wroght his felawe wo;
Unhorséd hath ech oother of hem tweye.
Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgo-
pheye,

Whan that hir whelpe is stole whan it is
lite,

So cruel on the hunte, as is Arcite
For jelous herte upon this Palamoun;
Ne in Belmarye ther nys so fel leoun, ²⁶³⁰
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his praye desirèth so the blood,
As Palamoun, to sleen his foo Arcite.
The jelous strokès on hir helmes byte;
Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydès rede.

Som tyme an ende ther is of every dede,
For, er the sonne unto the restè wente,
The stronge kyng Emetréus gan hente
This Palamoun, as he faught with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to
byte, ²⁶⁴⁰

And by the force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and y-drawe unto the stake.
And in the rescus of this Palamoun
The stronge kyng Lygurge is born adoun,
And kyng Emetréus, for al his strengthe,
Is born out of his sadel a swerdès lengthe;
So hitte him Palamoun, er he were take;
But al for noght; he was broght to the
stake.

He hardy hertemyghte hym helpè naught;
He moste abyde, whan that he was caught,
By force, and cek by composicioun. ²⁶⁵¹

Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun,
That moot namoorè goon agayn to fighte?
And whan that Theseus haddè seyn this
sighte

Unto the folk that foghten thus echon
He crydè, ‘Hoo! namoore, for it is doon!
I wol be trewè juge, and no partie;
Arcite of Thebès shall have Emelie

²⁶²⁶ *Galgopheye*. Prof. Skeat identifies this with the valley of Gargaphie (in Bœotia), where Actæon was torn in pieces. Tyrwhitt suggests a town called Galapha in Mauritania Tingitana.
²⁶³⁰ *Belmarye*, in North Africa.

That by his fortune hath hire faire y-wonne.'

Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne,
For joye of this, so loude and heighe
with-alle, 2661

It seméd that the lystès sholde falle.

What kan now fairè Venus doon above?
What seith she now, what dooth this
queene of love,

But wepeth so, for wantynge of hir wille,
Til that hir tcerès in the lystès fille?
She seyde, 'I am ashaméd doutlees.'

Saturnus seyde, 'Doghter, hoolde thy pees,
Mars hath his wille, his knyght hath al
his boone,

And, by myn heed, thou shalt been eséd
soone.' 2670

The trompès, with the loudè myn-
stralcie,

The heraudes, that ful loudè yolle and crie,
Been in hire wele, for joye of daun Arcite.
But herkneth me, and stynteth now a lite,
Which a myracle ther bifel anon.

Thisfiers Arcite hath of his helm y-don,
And on a courser, for to shewe his face,
He prikethe endélong the largè place,
Lokyng upward up-on this Emelye, 2679
And she agayn hym caste a frendlich eye
(For wommen, as to speken in comune,
Thei folwen all the favour of Fortune),
And was al his, in chiere, as in his herte.

Out of the ground a fyr infernal sterte,
From Pluto sent, at réqueste of Saturne,
For which his hors for ferè gan to turne,
And leep aside, and foundred as he leep,
And er that Arcité may taken keep,
He pighte hym on the pomel of his heed,
That in the placè he lay as he were deed,
His brest to-brosten with his sadel-bowe.
As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,

2683. *And was al his, in chiere, as in his herte.* This is Dr. Furnivall's emendation, no MS. containing the first *in*—'she was all his in her looks, as the queen of his heart'; H reads *and for as*; Hengwrt, *And she was al his cheere*, etc., i.e. 'all his delight, as regarded his heart,' but this is not the use of *cheere* here wanted.

2684. *fyr, F³ furie.* In Boccaccio (*Tes.* ix. 4) it is a fury raised by Venus.

2691. *sadel-bowe.* The 'bow' was a curved piece of wood fixed before and behind the saddle to hold the rider in his seat.

So was the blood y-ronnen in his face.
Anon he was y-born out of the place,
With hertè soor, to Thesèus paleys.
Tho was he korven out of his harneys,
And in a bed y-brought ful faire and blyve;
For he was yet in memorie and alyve,
And alwey cryngre after Emelye. 2699

Duc Thesèus with al his compaignye
Is comen hoom to Atthenes his citee,
With allè blisse and greet solempnitee;
Al be it that this áventure was falle,
He noldè noght disconforten hem alle,—
Men seyden eek that Arcite shal nat dye,
He shal been heeléd of his maladye.

And of another thyng they weren as
fayn,

That of hem allè was ther noon y-slayn;
Al were theysoore y-hurt, and namelyoon,
That with a spere was thirléd his brest
boon. 2710

To otherè woundes and to broken armes,
Somme hadden salvès and somme hadden
charmes,

Fermaciès of herbès, and eek save
They drunken, for they wolde hir lymès
have.

For which this noble duc, as he wel kan,
Conforteth and honoureth every man,
And madè revel al the longè nyght
Unto the straungè lordès, as was right;
Ne ther was holden no disconfitynge
But as a justès, or a tourneyngre; 2720
For soothly ther was no disconfiture,
For fallyng nys nat but an áventure,
Ne to be lad by force unto the stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knyghtès take,
Ó persone allone, withouten mo,
And haryed forth by armè, foot and too,
And eke his steedè dryven forth with
staves,

With footmen, bothè yemen and eek
knaves,—

It nas aretted hym no vileynye;
Ther may no man clepen it cowardye. 2730

For which anon duc Thesèus leet crye,
To stynten allè rancour and envye,
The gree as wel of o syde as of oother,
And eyther syde y-lik as ootheres brother;
And yaf hem yiftès after hir degree,
And fully heelèd a feestè dayès thre,

And convoyed the kynges worthily
Out of his toun, a journee largely,
And hoom wente every man the righte
way ;

Ther was namoore, but 'Fare wel !'
'Have good day !' 2740

Of this bataille I wol namoore endite,
But speke of Palamoun and of Arcyte.

Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the
soore

Encreeseth at his herte moore and moore.
The clothered blood, for any lechecraft,
Corrupteth, and is in his bouk y-laft,
That neither veynè-blood ne ventusyng,
Ne drynke of herbès may ben his
helpynge ;

The vertu expulsiſ, or animal,
Fro thilk vertu cleped natural, 2750
Ne may the venym voyden ne expelle.

The pipès of his longès gonne to swelle,
And every lacerte in his brest adoun
Is shent with venym and corrupcioun.

Hym gayneth neither, for to gete his lif,
Vomyt upward, ne dounward laxatif ;
Al is to-brosten thilkè regioun ;

Nature hath now no dominacioun ;
And certeinly, ther Nature wol nat wirche,
Farewel, phisik ! go ber the man to chirche !
This al and som, that Arcite moot dye,
For which he sendeth after Emelye,
And Palamon, that was his cosyn deere.
Thanne seyde he thus as ye shal after
heere :

'Naught may the woful spirit in myn
herte

Declare o point of alle my sorwès smerte
To yow, my lady, that I lovè moost,
But I biquethe the servyce of my goost
To yow aboven every creature, 2769

Syn that my lyf ne may no lenger dure.
Allas the wo ! alas, the peynès stronge,
That I for yow have suffred, and so longe !
Allas, the deeth ! alas, myn Emelye !
Allas, departynge of our compaignye !
Allas, myn hertès queene ! alas, my wyf !
Myn hertès lady, endere of my lyf !
What is this world ? what asketh men to
have ?

Now with his love, now in his coldè grave
2770. *ne*, supplied by Tyrwhitt.

Allone, withouten any compaignye. 2771
Farewel, my sweté foo, myn Emelye !
And softè taak me in youre armès tweye
For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.

'I have heer with my cosyn Palamon
Had strif and rancour, many a day agon,
For love of yow, and for my jalousye,
And Juppiter so wys my soule gye
To speken of a servaunt proprely,
With allè circumstances trewely, --
That is to seyn, trouthe, honour, and
knyghthede,

Wysdom, humblesse, estaat and heigh
kynrede, 2790

Fredom, and al that longeth to that art, --
So Juppiter have of my soule part,
As in this world right now ne knowe I non
So worthy to ben loved as Palamon,
That serveth yow and wol doon al his lyf.
And if that ever ye shul ben a wyf,
Forget nat Palamon, the gentil man, --
And with that word his spechè faillè gan,
For from his feet up to his brest was come
The coold of deeth, that hadde him over-
come ; 2800

And yet moore-over, in his armès two,
The vital strengthe is lost and al ago.
Oonly the intellect, withouten moore
That dwellèd in his herte syk and soore,
Gan failen when the herte feltè deeth,
Duskèd his eyen two and faillèd breeth.
But on his lady yet caste he his eye ;
His lastè word was, 'Mercy, Emelye !'
His spirit chaungèd hous, and wentè ther,
As I cam never, I kan nat tellen wher.
Therefore I stynte, I nam no divinistre ;
Of soulès fynde I nat in this registre,
Ne me ne list thilke opinions to telle,
Of hem, though that they writen wher
they dwelle.

Arcite is coold, ther Mars his soule gye ;
Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.

Shrighte Emelye, and howleth Palamon,
And Thesèus his suster took anon
Swownynge, and baar hire for the corps-
away.

What helpeth it to tarien forth the day,

2799. *feet*, EH³ *herte* ; Petworth, *for from hu
fete unto the herte*.

2801. *in*, E⁶ *for in*.

To tellen how she weepe, bothe eve and
morwe? 2821

f'or in swich cas wommen have swiche
sorwe,

Whan that hir housbonds ben from hem
ago,

That, for the moorè part, they sorwen so,
Or ellis fallen in swich maladye,

That, at the lastè, certainly they dye.

Infinite been the sorwès and the teeres
Of oldè folk, and folk of tendrè yeeres,
In all the toun for deeth of this Theban;
For hym ther wepeth bothè child and
man; 2830

So greet a wepyng was ther noon, certayn,
Whan Ector was y-broght al fresch y-slayn
To Troye. Allas! the pitee that was ther,
Crachyng of chekès, rentyng eek of
heer.

'Why woldestow be deed?' thise
wommen crye,

'And haddest gold ynough, and Emelye.'

Nó man myghte gladen Theseus,
Savyng his oldè fader Egeus,
That knew this worldès transmutacioun,
As he hadde seyn it chaungen, up and
down, 2840

Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse,
And shewèd hem ensamples and liknesse.

'Right as ther dyèd never man,' quod
he,

'That he ne lyvede in erthe in som degree,
Right so ther lyvede never man,' he seyde,
'In all this world, that som tym he ne
deyde;

This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,
And we been pilgrymes, passyng to and
fro;

Deeth is an ende of every worldly soore';
And over al this yet seyde he muchel
moore 2850

To this effect, ful wisely to enhorte
The peple that they sholde hem reconforte.

Duc Theseus, with all his bisy cure,
Cast busily wher that the sepulture
Of goode Arcite may best y-makèd be,

2840. *chaungen*, from Hengwrt; H *torne*; E⁵
om.

2849. *worldly*, E *worldes*.

2854. *busily*, E⁶ *now*.

And eek moost honorable in his degree;
And at the laste he took conclusioun

That ther as first Arcite and Palamoun
Hadden for love the bataille hem bitwene,

That in that selvè grové, swoote and
grene, 2860

Ther as he hadde his anorouse desires,
His compleynte, and for love his hootè
fires,

He woldè make a fyr in which the office
Fúneral he myghte al accomplice;

And leet comande anon to hakke and
hewe

The okès olde, and leye hem on a rewe,
In colpons, wel arrayèd for to brenne.

His officers with swiftè feet they renne,
And ryden anon at his comandement.

And after this Theseus hath y-sent 2870
After a beere, and it al over spradde

With clooth of gold, the richeste that ho
hadde;

And of the same suyte he clad Arcite.

Upon his hondès hadde he glove white,
Eek on his heed a coroune of laurer grene,

And in his hond a swerd ful bright and
kene.

He leyde hym, bare the visage, on the
beere.

Ther-with he weep that pitee was to heere;
And, for the peple sholdè seen hym alle,

Whan it was day he broghte hym to the
halle, 2880

That roreth of the cryng and the soun.

Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,
With flotery berd and ruggy asschy heeres,

In clothès blake, y-droppèd al with teeres;
And passyng othere of wepyng, Emelye,

The rewefulleste of al the compaignye.
In as muche as the servyce sholdè be

The moorè noble and riche in his degree,
Duc Theseus leet forth thre steedès
bryng,

That trappèd were in steele al gliteryng
And covered with the armes of daun

Arcite. 2891

Upon thise steedes, that weren grete and
white,

Ther sitten folk, of whiche oon baar his
sheeld,

Another his spere up in his hondès heeld,

The thriddé baar with hym his bowe
 Turkeys 2895
 (Of brend gold was the caas, and eek the
 harneys);

And riden forth a paas with sorweful
 cheere,

Toward the grove, as ye shul after heere.
 The nobleste of the Grekés that ther were
 Upon hir shuldrés caryeden the beere,
 With slaké paas, and eyen rede and wete,
 Thurgh-out the citee, by the maister strete,
 That sprad was al with blak, and wonder
 hyc

Right of the same is al the strete y-wrye.

Upon the right hond wente olde Egéus,
 And on that oother syde duc Theseús,
 With vessels in hir hand of gold ful fyn
 Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn :
 Eek Palamon, with ful greet compaignye,
 And after that cam woful Emelye, 2910
 With fyr in honde, as was that tyme the
 gyse

To do the office of funeral servyse.

Heigh labour, and ful greet apparail-
 lynge,

Was at the service and the fyr makynge,
 That with his grené tope the heven
 raughte,

And twenty fadme of brede the armés
 straughte ;

This is to seyn, the bowés weren so brode.
 Of stree first ther was leyd ful many a lode ;
 But how the fyr was makéd up on highte,
 And eek the namés that the trees highte, ---
 As ook, firre, birch, aspe, alder, holm,
 popeler, 2921

Wylugh, elm, plane, asshe, box, chasteyn,
 lynde, laurer,

Mapul, thorn, bech, hasel, ew,
 whippeltre, —

How they weren feld shal nat be toold
 for me ;

Ne how the goddés ronnen up and doun,
 Disherited of hire habitacioun,
 In whiche they wonéden in reste and pees,
 Nymphés, fawnes, and amadriades ;
 Ne how the beestés and the briddés alle
 Fledden for feré, whan the wode was falle ;
 Ne how the ground agast was of the light,

2920. that, H⁵ how.

That was nat wont to seen the sonnē
 bright ;

Ne how the fyr was couchéd first with
 stree,

And thanne with dryc stokkés, cloven a
 thre,

And thanne with grené wode and spicerye,
 And thanne with clooth of gold, and
 with perrye,

And gerlandes, hangynge with ful many
 a flour,

The mirre, thencens, with al so greet
 odour ;

Ne how Arcite lay among al this,
 Ne what richesse aboute his body is, 2940

Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,
 Putte in the syr of funeral servyse,

Ne how she swowned whan men made
 the fyr,

Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desyr,
 Ne what jeweles men in the fyr tho caste
 Whan that the fyr was greet and brenté
 faste ;

Ne how somme caste hir sheeld, and
 somme hir spere,

And of hire vestimentz, whiche that they
 were,

And coppés full of wyn, and milk, and
 blood,

Into the fyr, that brente as it were
 wood ; 2950

Ne how the Grekés, with an huge route,
 Thriés riden al the place aboute

Upon the left hand, with a loud shoutynge,
 And thriés with hir sperés claterynge,

And thriés how the ladyes gonnc crye,
 And how that lad was homward Emelye ;

Ne how Arcite is brent to asshe colde,
 Ne how that lychéwaké was y-holde

Al thilké nyght ; ne how the Grekés pleye
 The waké-pleyes ; ne kepe I nat to seye

Who wrastleth best naked, with oille
 enoynt, 2961

Ne who that baar hym best in no disjoynt.
 I wol nat tellen eek how that they goon

Hoom til Atthenés, whan the pleye is
 doun ;

But shortly to the point thanne wol I
 wende,

And maken of my longé tale an ende.

By processe and by lengthe of certeyn
yeres,
Al styntyd is the moornyng and the teres
Of Grekës, by oon general assent. 2969
Thanne semed me ther was a parlément
At Atthenes, upon certein poyntz and caas;
Among the whiché poyntz y-spoken was,
To have with certein contrees alliaunce,
And have fully of Thebans obeissaunce.
For which this noble Thesëus anon
Leet senden after gentil Palamon,
Unwist of hym what was the cause and
why;
But in his blaké clothës sorwefully
He cam at his comandément in hye.
Tho senté Thesëus for Einelye. 2980
Whan they were set, and hust was al
the place,
And Theseus abiden hadde a space
Er any word cam fram his wisé brest,
His eyen sette he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he sikéd stille,
And after that right thus he seyde his wille:
'The Firsté Moevere of the cause above,
Whan he first made the fairé cheyne of love,
Greet was theeffect and heigh was his
entente;
Wel wiste he why and what therof he
mente, 2990
For with that fairé cheyne of love he bond
The fyr, the eyr, the water and the lond,
In certeyn boundés that they may nat flec.
That same Prince, and that same
Moevere,' quod he,
'Hath stablissid in this wrecchéd world
adoun
Certeyn dayés and duracioun
To al that is engendrid in this place,
Over the whiché day they may nat pace,—
Al mowe they yet tho dayés wel abregge,
Ther nedeth noon auctoritee allegge 3000
For it is preevéd by experience,
But that me list declaren my sentence.
Thanne may men by this ordre wel
discerne

2987-3016. *The Firste Moevere*, etc. Theseus takes the arguments of this speech from Boethius, *De Consolatione*, bk. ii. met. 3; bk. iv. pr. 6; bk. iii. pr. 10.

2994. *and that same Moevere*, Heng.² om. *that*; Hl. *and moevere eek*.

That thilké Moevere stable is and eterne.
Wel may men knowé, but it be a fool,
That every part dirryveth from his hool;
For nature hath nat taken his bigynnyng
Of no partie, ne cantel, of a thyng,
But of a thyng that parfit is and stable,
Descendynge so, til it be corruppable.
And therfore of his wisé purveiaunce 3011
He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,
That speces of thyngés and progressiouns
Shullen enduren by successiouns,
And nat eterne, withouten any lye;
This maystow understonde, and seen at
eye.

'Loo the ook, that hath so long a
norisshyng

From tymé that it first bigynneth sprynge,
And hath so long a lif as we may see,
Yet at the lasté wasted is the tree. 3020

'Considereth eek how that the hardé
stoon

Under oure feet, on which we trede and
goon,

Yit wasteth it, as it lyth by the weye;
The brodé ryver somtyme wexeth dreye;
The greté tounés se we wane and wende;
Thanne may ye se that al this thyng hath
ende.

'Of man and womman seen we wel
also,

That nedeth in oon of thisé termés two,
This is to seyn, in youthe or ellés age,
He moot be deed, the kyng as shal a
page; 3030

Som in his bed, som in the depé see,
Som in the largé feeld, as men may se;
Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilké
weye:

Thanne may I seyn that al this thyng
moot deye.

'What maketh this but Juppiter, the
kyng,

The which is prince, and cause of allé
thyng,

Convertinge al unto his propré welle,
From which it is dirryvéd, sooth to telle?

3015. H *And nat eterne be, withoute lye*.

3025. *tounes*, E *tores*.

3034. *that*, om. E².

3036. *The which*, E² *that*.

And here-agayns no créature on lyve,
Of no degree, availleth for to stryve. 3040

‘Thanne is it wysdom, as it thynketh me,
To maken vertu of necessitee,

And take it weel that we may not eschue,
And namely that to us alle is due.

And whoso gruccheth ought, he dooth
folye,

And rebel is to hym that al may gye ;
And certainly a man hath moost honour,

To dyen in his excellence and flour,
Whan he is siker of his goodè name ;

Thanne hath he doon his freend, ne hym,
no shame, 3050

And gladder oghte his freend been of his
deeth,

Whan with honour up-yolden is his breeth,
Than whan his name apallèd is for age,

For al forgotten is his vassellage.

Thanne is it best, as for a worthy fame,
To dyen whan that he is best of name.

‘The contrarie of al this is wilfulness.

Whygrucchen we, why have we hevynesse,
That goode Arcite, of chivalrie flour,

Departed is, with duetee and honour, 3060
Out of this foulè prisson of this lyf?

Whygrucchen heere his cosyn and his wyf
Of his welfare that loved hem so weel?

Kan he hem thank?—Nay, God woot,
never a deel—

That bothe his soule and eek hem-self
offende,

And yet they mowe hir lustès nat amende.

‘What may I conclude of this longè
serye,

But after wo, I rede us to be merye,
And thanken Juppiter of al his grace?

And er that we departen from this place
I redè that we make of sorwès two 3071

O parfit joyè, lastyng evermo.
And looketh now, wher moost sorwe is

her-inne,

Ther wol we first amenden and bigynne.

‘Suster,’ quod he, ‘this is my fullè
assent,

With all thavyys heere of my parlément,
That gentil Palamon, thyn owene knyght,

That serveth yow with willè, herte, and
myght,

3077. *thyn, H⁶ your.*

And ever hath doon, syn that ye first
hym knewe,

That ye shul of your grace upon hym
rewe, 3080

And taken hym for housbonde and for
lord ;

Lene me youre hond, for this is oure
accord.

Lat se now of youre wommanly pitee :

He is a kyngès brother sone, *pardee*,

And though he were a pourè bachelor,

Syn he hath servèd yow so many a yeer

And had for yow so greet adversitee,

It mostè been considered, leeveth me,

For gentil mercy oghte to passen right.’

Thanne seyde he thus to Palamon ful
right : 3090

‘I trowe ther nedeth litel sermonyng
To makè yow assentè to this thyng ;

Com neer, and taak youre lady by the
hond.’

Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond

That hightè matrimoine, or mariage,

By al the conseil and the baronage ;

And thus with allè blisse and melodye

Hath Palamon y-weddèd Emelye,

And God, that al this wydè world hath
wrought,

Sende hym his love that it hath decre
aboght, 3100

For now is Palamon in allè wele,
Lyvyng in blisse, in riches, and in

heele ;

And Emelye hym loveth so tendrely,

And he hire serveth al-so gentilly,

That never was ther no word hem bitwene

Of jalousie, or any oother tene.

Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye ;

And God save al this fairè compaignye.

Amen.

*Heere folwen the wordes bitwene the
Hoost and the Millere*

Whan that the Knyght had thus his
tale y-toold,

In al the routè ne was ther yong ne
oold 3110

3106. *or any, H ne of non.*

That he ne seyde it was a noble storie,
And worthy for to drawn to memorie ;
And namely the gentils everichon.

Oure Hoostè lough and swoor, 'So
moot I gon,
This gooth aright ; unboked is the male ;
Lat se now who shal telle another tale ;
For trewely the game is wel bigonne.
Now telleth on, sire Monk, if that ye
konne

Sunwhat to quitè with the Knyghtès tale.'

The Millere, that for-dronken was al
pale, ³¹²⁰

So that unnethe upon his hors he sat,
He nolde avalen neither hood ne hat,
Ne abyde no man for his curteisie,
But in Pilatès voys he gan to crie,
And swoor by armès, and by blood and
bones,

'I kan a noble tale for the nones,
With which I wol now quite the
Knyghtès tale.'

Oure Hoostè saugh that he was dronke
of ale,

And seyde, 'Abyd, Robyn, my leevè
brother, ³¹²⁹

Som better man shal telle us first another ;
Abyde, and lat us werken thriftily.'

'By Goddès soule,' quod he, 'that wol
nat I,

For I wol speke, or ellès go my wey.'

Oure Hoost answerde, 'Tel on a
devele wey !

'Thou art a fool, thy wit is overcome.'

'Now herkneth,' quod the Millere,
'alle and some ;

But first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my
soun ;

And, therefore, if that I mysspeke or seye,
Wyte it the ale of Southwerk, I you
preye ; ³¹⁴⁰

For I wol telle a legende and a lyf,

^{3112.} *for to drawn to, H to be drawn in.*

^{3114.} *lough, H tho lough.*

^{3115.} *aright, H right wel.*

^{3117.} *on, H6 ye.*

^{3124.} *in Pilates voys, the ranting tone assigned to Pilate in the Miracle Plays.*

^{3128.} *saugh that he was dronke, H saugh wel how dronke he was.*

^{3138.} *it, H wel.*

Bothe of a carpenter and of his wyf,
How that a clerk hath set the wrightès
cappe.'

The Reve answerde and seyde, 'Stynt
thy clappe !

Lat be thy lewéd, dronken harlotrye ;
It is a synne, and eek a greet folye
To apeyren any man, or hym defame,
And eek to bryngen wyvès in swich fame ;
Thou mayst ynogh of othere thyngès seyn.'

This dronké Millere spak ful soone
ageyn ³¹⁵⁰

And seyde, 'Levé brother Osewold,
Who hath no wyf he is no cokèwold,
But I sey nat therfore that thou art oon,
Ther been ful goodè wyvès many oon,
And ever a thousand goode ayeyns oon
badde ;

That knowestow wel thyself, but if thou
madde.

Why artow angry with my talè now ?

I have a wyf *parice*, as wel as thou,
Yet nolde I, for the oxen in my plough,
Taken upon me moorè than ynogh ; ³¹⁶⁰
Though that thou deme thiself that thou
be oon,

I wol bilevé wel that I am noon.

An housbonde shal nat been inquisityf
Of Goddès pryvete, nor of his wyf ;
So he may fyndè Goddès foysoun there,
Of the remenant nedeth nat enquire.'

What sholde I moorè seyn, but this
Millere

He nolde his wordès for no man forbere,
But told his cherlès tale in his manere.
Mathynketh that I shal reherce it heere ;
And therfore every gentil wight I preye,
For Goddès love, demeth nat that I seye
Of yvel entente, but for I moot reherce
Hir talès allè, be they better or werse,
Or ellès falsen som of my mateere : ³¹⁷⁵
And therfore, who-so list it nat y-heere,

^{3148.} *swich fame, H yllname.*

^{3161.} *Though, etc.* 'This reading of H (partly supported by Camb.) is much better than the 'As demen of myself that I were oon' of E⁵.

^{3167.} *moore seyn but this, H seye but that this proud.*

^{3173.} *for, E² that.*

^{3174.} *Hir tales alle, be they, etc., H Here wordes alle, al be they, etc.*

Turne over the leef and chese another tale ;
 For he shal fynde ynowe, bothe grete
 and smale,
 Of storial thyng that toucheth gentillesse,
 And eek moralitee, and hoolynesse,— 3180
 Blameth nat me if that ye chese amys.
 The Millere is a cherl, ye knowe wel this,
 So was the Reve, and othere manye mo,
 And harlotrie they tolden bothè two.
 Avyseth yow, putteth me out of blame ;
 And eek men shal nat maken ernest of
 game.

MILLER'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Millere his Tale

Whilom ther was dwellynge at Oxenford
 A richè gnof, that gestès heeld to bord,
 And of his craft he was a carpenter.
 With hym ther was dwellynge a poure
 scoler, 3190
 Hadde lernèd art, but al his fantasye
 Was turnèd for to lern astrologye,
 And koude a certeyn of conclusiouns,
 To demen by interrogaciouns,
 If that men askèd hym in certein houres
 Whan that men sholde have droghte or
 ellès shoures,
 Or if men askèd hym what sholde bifalle
 Of every thyng, I may nat rekene hem
 alle.

This clerk was clepèd hendè Nicholas.
 Of deernè love he koude, and of solas,
 And ther-to he was sleigh and ful privee,
 And lyk a mayden mekè for to see. 3202
 A chambrè hadde he in that hostelrye
 Allone, withouten any compaignye,
 Ful fetisly y-dight, with herbès swoote,
 And he hymself as sweete as is the roote
 Of lycorys, or any cetèwale.
 His Almageste, and bookès grete and
 smale,

The Millere his Tale. No original or analogue has been discovered for this story, and there is no reason to doubt that it is of Chaucer's own invention.

3208. *Almageste*, the chief work of the astronomer Ptolemy, called by the Greeks *Μεγάλη Σύνταξις τῆς Ἀστρονομίας*, a name which the Arabs by substituting a superlative turned into *Al-magestè*, or *Almagest*.

His astrelabic, longynge for his art,
 His augrym stonès, layen faire apart, 3210
 On shelvès couchèd at his beddès heed,
 His presse y-covered with a faldyng reed,
 And all above ther lay a gay sautrie,
 On which he made a-nyghtès melodie
 So sweetly, that al the chambrè rong,
 And *Angelus ad Virginem*, he song ;
 And after that he song the 'kyngès
 noote' ;

Ful often blessèd was his myrie throte,
 And thus this sweetè clerk his tymè
 spente 3219
 After his freendès fyndyng and his rente.

This carpenter hadde wedded newe a
 wyf,

Which that he lovèd moorè than his lyf ;
 Of eighteteenè yeer she was of age.
 Jalous he was, and heeld hire narwe in
 cage,

For she was yong and wylde, and he was
 old,

And demed hymself been lik a cokèwold.
 He knew nat Catoun, for his wit was
 rude,—

That bad man sholdè wedde his
 simylitude.

Men sholdè wedden after hire estaat, 3229
 For youthe and elde is often at debaat ;
 But sith that he was fallen in the snare,
 He moste endure, as oother folk, his care.

Fair was this yongè wyf, and therewithal.
 As any wezele, hir body gent and smal.
 A ceint she werede, y-barrèd al of silk ;
 A barmclooth eek, as whit as mornè milk,
 Upon hir lendès, ful of many a goore ;
 Whit was hir smok, and broyden al bifoore,
 And eek bihyndè, on hir coler aboute,
 Of colblak silk withinne and eek withoute.

3216. *Angelus ad Virginem.* The music of a 13th-century chant to these words is extant at the British Museum. Of the 'kynges noote' nothing appears to be known.

3227. *He knew nat Catoun.* The maxim here alluded to is not properly one of Cato's ; but I find it in a kind of Supplement to the Moral Distichs, entitled *Facetus* int. Auctores octo morales, Lugd. 1538, cap. iii.

*Duc tibi prole parem sponsam moresque venustam,
 Si cum pace velis vitam deducere justam
 (Tyrwhitt). The sentiment is as old as the Seven Sages.

3231. *fallen in*, H *brought into*.

3232. *folk*, H *doon*.

The tapés of hir whitë voluper 3241
 Were of the samë suyte of hir coler ;
 Hir filet brood, of silk and set ful hye ;
 And sikerly she hadde a likerous eye.
 Ful smale y-pulléd were hire browés two,
 And tho were bent, and blake as any sloo.
 She was ful mooré blisful on to see
 Than is the newé percionettë tree,
 And softer than the wolfe is of a wether ;
 And by hir girdel heeng a purs of lether,
 Tasseled with grene and perléd with
 latoun. 3251

In al this world, to seken up and down,
 There nas no man so wys that koudé
 thenche

So gay a popelote, or swich a wenche.
 Ful brighter was the shynyng of hir hewe
 Than in the Tour the noble y-forgéd newe.
 But of hir song it was as loude and yerne
 As any swalwé chitteryng on a berne.
 Therto she koudé skippe and maké game,
 As any kyde, or calf, folwyng his dame.
 Hir mouth was sweete as bragot or the
 meeth. 3261

Or hoord of apples leyd in hey or heeth.
 Wynsynge she was, as is a joly colt ;
 Long as a mast and uprighte as a bolt.
 A brooch sche baar upon hir love coler,
 As brood as is the boos of a bokeler ;
 Hir shoes were lacéd on hir leggés hye ;
 She was a prymerole, a piggesnye
 For any lord, to leggen in his bedde,
 Or yet for any good yeman to wedde. 3270

Now, sire, and eft, sire, so bifel the cas,
 That on a day this hendé Nicholas,
 Fil with this yongé wyf to rage and pleye,
 Whil that hir housbonde was at Oseneye,
 As clerkés ben ful subtile and ful queynte ;
 And privély he caughte hire by the queynte,
 And seyde, 'Y-wis, but if ich have my
 wille,

For deerné love of thee, lemman, I
 spille' ;
 And heeld hire hardé by the haunché
 bones,

3256. *Tour*, i.e. the Tower of London, where the Mint was.

3256. *the noble*, a gold coin (6s. 8d.), first minted by Edward II.

3258. *chitteryng*, F⁴ *sittyng*.

3274. *Oseneye*, Osney, a village near Oxford.

And seyde, 'Lemman, love me al atones,
 Or I wol dyen, also God me save !' 3281

And she sproong, as a colt doth in the
 trave,

And with hir heed sche wryed faste away,
 And seyde, 'I wol nat kisse thee, by
 my fey !

Why, lat be !' quod she, 'lat be,
 Nicholas !

Or I wol crie, "out, Harrow," and "Allas !"
 Do wey youre handés, for your curteisye !'

This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye,
 And spak so faire, and profred hym so
 faste,

That she hir love hym graunted atté laste,
 And swoor hir ooth, by Seint Thomas of
 Kent, 3291

That she wol been at his comandément
 Whan that she may hir leyser wel espie.
 'Myn housbonde is so ful of jalousie,
 That but ye wayté wel and been privee,
 I woot right wel I nam but deed,' quod
 she ;

'Ye mosté been ful deerne, as in this cas,'
 'Nay, ther-of care thee noght,' quod
 Nicholas.

'A clerk hadde litherly biset his whyle
 But if he koude a carpenter bigyle.' 3300
 And thus they been accorded and y-sworn
 To wayte a tyme, as I have told biforn.

Whan Nicholas had doon thus everidecl,
 And thakkéd hire aboute the lendés weel,
 He kist hire sweete, and taketh his sawtric,
 And pleyeth faste, and maketh melodie.

Thanne fil it thus, that to the paryssh
 chirche,

Christés owené werkés for to wirche,
 This goodé wyf went on an haliday ; 3309
 Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day,
 So was it wasshen whan she leet hir werk.

Now was ther of that chirche a parissch
 clerk,

The which that was y-clepéd Absolon ;
 Crul was his heer and as the gold it
 shoon,

And strouted as a fanné, large and brode,

3282. *H and she sprang out as doth a colt in trave.*

3285. *Nicholas, H thou Nicholas.*

3289. *hym, E hire.*

Ful streight and evene lay his joly shode.
His rode was reed, his eyen greye as
goos ;

With Powlès wyndow corven on his shoos,
In hosès rede he wentè fetisly.
Y-clad he was ful smal and proprely, 3320
Al in a kirtel of a lyght waget,
Ful faire and thikkè been the poyntès set ;
And therupon he hadde a gay surplys,
As whit as is the blosme upon the rys.
A myrie child he was, so God me save,
Wel koude he laten blood and clippe
and shave,
And maken a chartre of lond or acquit-
aunce.

In twenty manere koude he trippe and
daunce
(After the scole of Oxenfordè tho),
And with his leggès casten to and fro, 3330
And pleyen songès on a small rubible ;
Therto he song somtyme a loud quynlyble,
And as wel koude he pleye on his giterne.
In al the toun nas brewhous ne tavern
That he ne visited with his solas,
Ther any gaylard tappesterè was.
But, sooth to seyn, he was somdel
squaymous

Of fartyng, and of spechè daungerous.

This Absolon, that jolif was and gay,
Gooth with a sencer on the haliday, 3340
Sensynge the wyvès of the parisshe faste,
And many a lovely look on hem he caste,
And namely on this carpenteris wyf.
To loken on hire hym thoughte a myrie lyf,
She was so propre, and sweete, and
likerous.

I dar wel seyn if she hadde been a mous,
And he a cat, he wold hire hente anon.

This parisshe clerk, this joly Absolon,
Hath in his hertè swich a love longynge,
That of no wyf ne took he noon offrynge ;
For curteisie, he seyde, he woldè noon.

The moone, whan it was nyght, ful
brightè shoon, 3352

3318. *Powles wyndow.* The reference is to the open-work tracery, like that of the great Rose window at Old St. Paul's, in the fashionable shoes of the time. H² *wyndowes.*

3321. *lyght, H. fyn.*

3322. *H. Schapen with goores in the newe get.*

3352. *whan it was nyght, ful, H. at night ful clere and.*

And Absolon his gyterne hath y-take,
For paramours he thoughtè for to wake ;
And forth he gooth, jolif and amorous,
Til he cam to the carpenterès hous,
A litel after cokkès hadde y-crowe,
And dressèd hym up by a shotwyndowe,
That was upon the carpenteris wal.
He syngeth in his voys gentil and smal :
' *Nowe, deerè lady, if thy willè be,* 3361
I praye yow that ye wolde thynke on me,
Ful wel acordaunt to his gyternynge.

This carpenter awook, and herdè synge,
And spak unto his wyf, and seyde anon,
' What, Alison, herestow nat Absolon,
That chaunteth thus under oure bourès
wal ? '

And she answerde hir housbonde thei-
withal,

' Yis, God woot, John, I heere it every del.'
This passeth forth ; what wol ye bet
than weel ? 3370

Fro day to day this joly Absolon
So woweth hire that hym is wo bigon ;
He waketh al the nyght and al the day,
He kembeth his lokkès brode, and
made hym gay,

He woweth hire by meenès and brocage,
And swoor he woldè been hir owene page :
He syngeth, brokkyng as a nyghtyngale ;
He sente hire pyment, meeth, and spicèd
ale,

And wafres, pipyng hoot out of the gleede ;
And, for she was of toun, he profreth
meede ; 3380

For som folk wol ben wonnen for richesse,
And somme for strokes, and somme for
gentillesse.

Somtyme to shewe his lightnesse and
maistrye

He pleyeth Heròdès, on a scaffold hye,
But what availleth hym, as in this cas ?
She loveth so this hendè Nicholas,

3354. *thoughte for to wake, H. seyde he wolde awake.*

3362. *thynke, H. rewe.*

3374. *He kembeth, H. To kembe,* an amusing but unlikely variant.

3377. *brokkyng, warbling ? ; H. crowyng.*

3384. *He pleyeth Heròdès,* etc. The Miracle Plays were at first chiefly acted by clerks ; the stage or 'scaffold' often had three compartments to represent Heaven, Earth, and Hell.

That Absolon may blowe the bukkès horn,
 He ne haddè for his labour but a scorn,
 And thus she maketh Absolon hire ape
 And al his earnest turneth til a jape. 3390
 Ful sooth is this proverbe, it is no lye,
 Men seyn right thus, 'Alwey the nyè slye
 Maketh the ferrè leevè to be looth';
 For though that Absolon be wood or
 wrooth,

By-causè that he fer was from hire sighte,
 This nyè Nicholas stood in his lighte:

Now bere thee wel, thou hendè
 Nicholas,

For Absolon may waille and synge, allas !
 And so bifel it on a Saturday

This carpenter was goon til Osénay, 3400

And hendè Nicholas and Alisoun

Acorded been to this conclusioun,

That Nicholas shal shapen hym a wyle

This sely, jealous housbonde to bigyle ;

And, if so be the gamè wente aright,

She sholdè slepen in his arm al nyght,

For this was his desir and hire also.

And right anon, withouten wordès mo,

This Nicholas no lenger woldè tarie,

But dooth ful softe unto his chambrè
 carie 3410

Bothe mete and drynkè for a day or
 tweye ;

And to hire housbonde bad hire for to
 seye,

If that he axèd after Nicholas,

She sholdè seye she nystè where he was,

Of al that day she saugh hym nat with
 eye ;

She trowèd that he was in maladye,

For for no cry hir maydè koude hym calle,

He nolde answer for nought that myghtè
 falle.

This passeth forth al thilkè Saturday

That Nicholas stille in his chambrè lay,

And eet and sleepe, or didè what hym
 leste, 3421

Til Sunday, that the sonnè gooth to reste.

This sely carpenter hath greet merveye

3387. *blowe the bukkès horn*, a phrase meaning
 'have his trouble for nothing.'

3405. *be the, H were this*.

3415. *that he was in, H he were falle in som*.

3417. *For for no cry hir mayde, H For no cry
 that hir mayde*, to be taken with next line.

Of Nicholas, or what thyng myghte hym
 eyle,

And seyde, 'I am adrad, by Seint Thomas
 It stondeh nat aright with Nicholas.

God shildè that he deyde sodeynly ;

This world is now ful tikel, sikerly ;

I saugh to day a cors y-born to chirche,

That now on Monday last I saugh hym
 wirche. 3430

'Go up,' quod he unto his knave anoon,

'Clepe at his dore, or knockè with a stoon ;
 Looke how it is, and tel me boldcly.'

This knavè gooth him up ful sturdily

And at the chambrè dorè, whil he stood,

He cride and knockèd as that he were
 wood,—

'What ! how ! what do ye, maister
 Nicholas ?

How may ye slepen al the longè day ?'

But al for noght, he herdè nat a word.

An hole he foond, ful lowe upon a bord,

Ther as the cat was wont in fat to crepe,

And at that hole he lookèd in ful depe,

And at the laste he hadde of hym a sighte.

This Nicholas sat gapyng ever uprighte,

As he had kikèd on the newè moone.

Adoun he gooth and tolde his maister
 soone

In what array he saugh this ilkè man.

This carpenter to blessen hym bigan,

And seyde, 'Help us, Seintè Frydeswyde !

A man woot litel what hym shal bityde ;

This man is fallè, with his astromye, 3451

In som woodnesse, or in some agonye.

I thoghte ay wel how that it sholdè be,

Mensholde nat knowe of Goddès pryvetee.

Ye, blessèd be alwey a lewèd man,

That noght but oonly his bilevè kan.

So ferde another clerk with astromye ;

He walkèd in the feeldès, for to pryce

Upon the sterrès, what ther sholdè bifalle,

Til he was in a marlè pit y-falle ; 3460

He saugh nat that. But yet by Seint

Thomas,

Me reweth soore of hendè Nicholas !

3449. *Seinte Frydeswyde*, still the patron saint
 of one of the Oxford parishes.

3451. *astromye*, a corruption of 'astronomy';
 the latter word is the reading of H⁴, but both
 here and in 3457 it spoils the metre.

3457. *another clerk*, Thales.

He shal be ratèd of his studyng,
If that I may, by Jhesus, hevene kyng !
'Get me a staf, that I may underspore,
Whil that thou, Robyn, hevest of the dore :
He shal out of his studyng, as I gesse.'
And to the chambrè dore he gan hym
dresse ;

His knavè was a strong carl, for the
noones,

And by the haspe he haaf it of atones,
Into the floor the dorè fil anon. 3471

This Nicholas sat ay as stille as stoon,
And ever gapèd upward into the eir.
This carpenter wende he were in despeir,
And hente hym by the sholdrès myghtily
And shook hym harde and cridè spitously,
'What, Nicholay ! what how ! what,
looke adoun !

Awake ! and thenk on Cristès passioun !
I crouche thee from elvès and fro wightes.'
Therwith the nyghtspel seyde he anon-
rightes, 3480

On fourè halvès of the hous aboute,
And on the thresshold of the dore
without :

*'Jhesu Crist and Seint Benedight,
Blesse this hous from every wikked wight
For nyghtes verye the white Pater noster.
Where wentestow, Seint Petres soster ?'*

And attè laste this hendè Nicholas
Gan for to sikè soore, and seyde, 'Allas !
Shal al this world be lost eftsoóns now ?'

This carpenter answerdè, 'What
seystow ? 3490

What, thyнк on God, as we doon, men
that swynke.'

This Nicholas answerdè, 'Fecche me
drynke ;

3477. *what* (3rd), H *man* : Heng.⁵ om.

3483. *Jhesu*, H *Lord Jhesu*.

3485. *For nyghtes*, etc. Tyrwhitt reads: *For the nyghtes mare the wite pater-noster* (may pater-noster defend thee from night-mare); Morris: *For nyghtes mare wereye the wite pater-noster* (guard thyself with pater-noster). But a charm of the 16th century quoted by Mr. Gilman runs:

'White Pater Noster, St. Peter's brother,
What hast thou in one hand? White-Book L.e.aves.
What hast i' th' other? Heaven Gate keys.
Open Heaven Gates and steike Hell Gates,
And let every crysom child creep to its own mother:
White Pater Noster. Amen.'

If this be genuine the *white* must stand.

And after wol I speke, in pryvètee,
Of certeyn thyng that toucheth me and
thee ;

I wol telle it noon oother man, certeyn.'

This carpenter goth doun and comth
ageyn,

And broghte of myghty ale a largè quart,
And whan that ech of hem had dronke
his part,

This Nicholas his dorè fastè shette 3499
And doun the carpenter by hym he sette.

He seyde, 'John, myn hoostè, lief
and deere,

Thou shalt upon thy trouthe swere me
heere

That to no wight thou shalt this conseil
wreye,

For it is Cristès conseil that I seye ;
And if thou tellè man thou art forlore,

For this vengauccè thou shalt han therfore,
'That if thou wreyè me thou shalt be wood.'

'Nay, Crist forbede it, for his hooly
blood,' 3508

Quod tho this sely man, 'I nam no labbe,
Ne, though I seye, I am nat lief to gabbe ;
Sey what thou wolt, I shal it never telle
To child ne wyf, by hym that harwèd
helle !'

'Now, John,' quod Nicholas, 'I
wol nat lye,

I have y-founde in myn astrologye,
As I have lookèd in the moonè bright,
That now a Monday next, at quarter nyght,
Shal falle a reyn, and that so wilde and
wood,

That half so greet was never Nocees flood.
This world,'heseycle, 'inlassè than an hour
Shal al be dreynt, so hidous is the shour ;
Thus schal mankyndè drenche and lese
hir lyf.' 3521

This carpenter answerde, 'Allas, my
wyf !

And shal she drenche ? Allas, myn
Alisoun !'

For sorwe of this he fil almoost adoun,
And seyde, 'Is ther no remedie in this cas ?'

3499. *fastè shette*, etc. ; H *gan to schitte*, And dede this carpenter doun by him sitte.

3510. *Ne, though I seye*, H *though I it seye*.

3520. *Shal al be dreynt*, H *Shal ben i-dreynt*.

'Why, yis, for Gode,' quod hendé
Nicholas,
'If thou wolt werken aftir loore and reed ;
Thou mayst nat werken after thyn owene
heed,
For thus seith Salomoun, that was ful
trewe,

"Werk al by conseil and thou shalt nat
rewe"; 3530

And if thou werken wolt by good conseil,
I undertake, withouten mast and seyl,
Yet shal I saven hire and thee and me.
Hastow nat herd how savéd was Noë,
Whan that oure Lord hadde warnéd hym
biforn

That al the world with water sholde be
lorn ?

'Yis,' quod this carpenter, 'ful yoorc
ago.'

'Hastou nat herd,' quod Nicholas, 'also,
The sorwe of Noë with his felaweshipe
Er that he myghte brynge his wyf to shipe?
Hym hadde be levere, I dar wel undertake,
At thilké tyme, than alle his wetheres
blake, 3542

That she hadde had a shipe hir-self allone.
And therefore, woostou what is best to
doone ?

This asketh haste, and of an hastif thyng
Men may nat preche or maken taryng.

'Anon go gete us faste into this in
A knedyng trogh, or ellis a kymelyn,
For ech of us, but loke that they be large,
In whiche we mowé swynme as in a barge,
And han ther-inne vitailé suffisant 3551

But for a day,—fy on the remenant,—
The water shal aslake and goon away
Abouté pryme upon the nexté day.

But Robyn may nat wite of this, thy knave,
Ne cek thy maydé Gille I may nat save ;
Axé nat why, for though thou aské me,
I wol nat tellen Goddés pryveteé ;
Suffiseth thee, but if thy wittés madde,
To han as greet a grace as Noë hadde.
Thy wyf shal I wel saven, out of doute.

3540. *Er that he myghte brynge, H that he
had or he gat.* In the Miracle Plays Noah's
wife refused to be saved without her gossips, and
when dragged in broke her husband's head.

3550. *In whiche we mowe swynme, H In
which that we may row.*

Go now thy wey and speed thee heer
aboute. 3562

'But whan thou hast for hire and
thee and me

Y-geten us thise knedyng-tubbés thre,
Thanne shaltow hange hem in the roof
ful hye,

That no man of oure purveiauncé spyé,
And whan thou thus hast doon as I have
seyd,

And hast oure vitaille faire in hem y-leyd,
And eek an ax to smyte the corde atwo,
Whan that the water comth, that we may
go ; 3570

And broke an hole, an heigh upon the
gable,

Unto the gardynward, over the stable,
That we may frely passen forth oure way,
Whan that the greté shour is goon away ;
Thanne schalt thou swynme as myrie, I
undertake,

As dooth the whité doke after hire drake ;
Thanne wol I clepe "how Alisoun, how
John,

Be myrie, for the flood wol passe anon,"
And thou wolt seyn, "Hayl, maister
Nicholay ! 3579

Good morwe, I se thee wel for it is day!"
And thanne shul we be lordés al oure lyf
Of al the world, as Noë and his wyf.

'But of o thing I warné thee ful right,
Be well avyséd on that ilké nyght

That we ben entred into shippés bord,
That noon of us ne speké nat a word,
Ne clepe, ne crie, but been in his preyère,
For it is Goddés owene heesté deere.

Thy wyf and thou moote hangé fer
atwynne,

For that bitwixé yow shal be no synne,
Na moore in lookyng than ther shal in
deede ; 3591

This ordinance is seyde ; so God thee
speede ;

Tomorwe at nyght, whan folk ben alle
aslepe,

Into our knedyng-tubbés wol we crepe,
And sitten there, abidyng Goddés grace.
Go now thy wey, I have no lenger space

3578. *wol passe, H passeth.*
3593. *folk ben alle, H men ben.*

To make of this no lenger sermonyng,—
Men seyn thus, “Sende the wise and sey
nothyng”;

Thou art so wys it needeth nat thee teche,
Go save oure lyf, and that I the biseche.’

This sely carpenter goth forth his wey;
Ful ofte he seith ‘Allas,’ and ‘Weylawey,’
And to his wyf he tolde his pryveetece,
And she was war, and knew it bet than he,
What al this queynté cast was for to seye;
But nathélees she ferde as she wolde deye,
And seyde, ‘Allas! go forth thy wey anon,
Help us to scape or we been lost echon!
I am thy trewe, verray, wedded wyf,
Go, deerè spouse, and help to save oure
lyf!’ 3610

Lo which a greet thyng is affeccion!
Men may dyen of ymaginacioun,
So depé may impressioun be take.

This sely carpenter bigynneth quake;
Hym thynketh verrailly that he may see
Noés flood, come walwyng as the see,
To drenchen Alisoun, his hony deere.

He wepeth, weyleth, maketh sory cheere;
He siketh, with ful many a sory swogh;
He gooth and geteth hym a knedyng trogh,
And after that a tubbe and a kymelyn,
And pryvly he sente hem to his in,
And heng hem in the roof in pryvetece.

His owene hande he made laddres thre,
To clymben by the ronges and the stalkes,
Into the tubbes, hangyng in the balkes;
And hem vitailleth, bothé trogh and tubbe,
With breid and chese and good ale in a
jubbe,

Suffisyng right ynogh as for a day;
But er that he hadde maad al this array,
He sente his knave, and cek his wenche
also, 3631

Upon his nede to London for to go;
And on the Monday, whan it drow to
nyght,

He shette his dore withouté candel lyght,
And dresseth al this thyng as it shal be;
And shortly, up they clomben allé thre;
They sitten stillé, wel a furlong way.

‘Now, *Pater noster*, clom,’ seyde
Nicholay;

3612. *Men may dyen* (slur *may*), II *A man may dye*.

And ‘Clom,’ quod John, and ‘Clom,’
seyde Alisoun.

This carpenter seyde his devocioun, 3640
And stille he sit and biddeth his preyere,
Ay waityng on the reyn, if he it heere.

The dedé sleepe, for verray bisynesse,
Fil on this carpenter, right as I gesse
Abouté corfew-tyme, or litel more;
For travaille of his goost he groneth soore,
And eft he routeth, for his heed myslay.
Doun of the laddre stalketh Nicholay,
And Alisoun ful softe adoun she spedde;
Withouten wordes mo they goon to bedde.
Ther as the carpenter is wont to lye, 3651
Ther was the revel and the melodye.

And thus lith Alison and Nicholas,
In bisynesse of myrthe and of solas,
Til that the belle of laudés gan to ryng,
And frerés in the chauncel gonné synge.

This parissch clerk, this amorous Absolon,

That is for love alwey so wo-bigon,
Upon the Monday was at Osceneye
With compaignye, hym to disporte and
pleye, 3660

And axéd upon cas a cloisterer
Ful prively after John the carpenter.
And he drough hym a-part out of the
chirche,

And seyde, ‘I noot, I saugh hym heere
nat wirche

Syn Saterdag; I trow that he be went
For tymber ther our abbot hath hym sent;
For he is wont for tymber for to go,
And dwellen at the grange a day or two;
Or ellés he is at his hous, certeyn; 3669
Where that he be I kan nat soothly seyn.’

This Absolon ful joly was and light,
And thoughté, ‘Now is tymé wake al nyght,
For sikirly I saugh him nat stiryng
Abouté his dore, syn day bigan to spryng.
So moot I thryve I shal, at cokkés crowe,
Ful pryvly go knokke at his wyndowe,
That stant ful lowe upon his bourés wal.
To Alison now wol I tellen al
My love-longyng; for yet I shal nat
mysse 3674

That at the lesté wey I shal hire kisse.

3643. *verray*, F⁵ *wey*.

3658. *alwey so*, H *so hard and*.

Som maner confort shal I have, parfay.
My mouth hath icched al this longé day,
That is a signe of kysying atté leste.

Al nyght me mette eek I was at a feeste;
Therefore I wol goon slepe an houre or
tweye,

And al the nyght thanne wol I wake
and pleye.'

Whan that the firsté cok hath crowe
anon

Up rist this joly lovere Absolon,
And hym arraieth gay, at poynt devys;
But first he cheweth greyn and lycorys,
To smellen sweete, er he hadde kembd
his heer. 3691

Under his tonge a trewe-love he beer,
For ther-by wende he to ben gracious.
He rometh to the carpenterés hous,
And stille he stant under the shot-wyn-
dowe,—

Unto his brist it raughte, it was so lowe,—
And softe he knokketh with a semysoun:
'What do ye, hony-comb, sweete Alisoun,
My fairé bryd, my sweeté cynamome?
Awaketh, lemman myn, and spekeh to me.
Wel litel thynten ye upon my wo 3701
That for youre love I sweté ther I go.
No wonder is, thogh that I swelte and
swete,

I moorne as dooth a lamb after the tete;
Y-wis, lemman, I have swich love-long-
ynge,

That lik a turtel trewe is my moornynge;
I may nat ete na moore than a mayde.'

'Go fro the wyndow, jakké-fool,' she
sayde,

'As help me God, it wol nat be, "com
ba me"; 3709

I love another, and elles I were to blame,
Wel bet than thee, by Jhesu, Absolon.
Go forth thy wey, or I wol caste a ston,
And lat me slepe, a twenty devel wey!'

'Allas,' quod Absolon, 'and weylawey,
That trewé love was ever so yvel biset!
Thanne kyssé me, syn it may be no bet,
For Jhesus love, and for the love of me.'

'Wiltow thanne go thy wey?' therwith
quod she.

3697. *knokketh*, H⁴ *coughith, cougheth, coughed*.
3702. *swete*, H *swelte*, faint.

'Ye certés, lemman,' quod this Absolon.
'Thanne make thee redy,' quod she,
'I come anon,' 3720

And unto Nicholas she seyde stille,
'Now hust and thou shalt laughen al
thy fille.'

This Absolon doun sette hym on his
knees,
And seyde, 'I am lord at alle degrees,
For after this I hope ther cometh moore.
Lemman, thy grace, and sweeté bryd,
thyn oore.'

The wyndow she undoth, and that in
haste,

'I have do,' quod she, 'com of, and speed
the faste,
Lest that our neighborés thee espie.'

This Absolon gan wyepe his mouth ful
drie: 3730

Dirk was the nyght as pich, or as the cole,
And at the wyndow out she pitte hir hole,
And Absolon hym fil no bet ne wers,
But with his mouth he kiste hir naked ers,
Ful savourly, er he was war of this.

Abak he sterte, and thoughte it was amys,
For wel he wiste a womman hath no berd.
He felte a thyng al rough and long y-herd,
And seyde, 'Fy, allas, what have I do?'
'Tehee!' quod she, and clapte the
wyndow to, 3740

And Absolon gooth forth a sory pas.
'A berd, a berd!' quod hendé Nicholas,
'By Goddés corps, this game goth faire
and weel.'

This sely Absolon herde every deel,
And on his lippe he gan for anger byte,
And to hymself he seyde, 'I shal thee
quyte.'

Who rubbeth now, who froteth now
his lippes
With dust, with sond, with straw, with
clooth, with chippes,

But Absolon?—that seith ful ofte, 'Allas!
My soule bitake I unto Sathanas, 3750
But me were levere than al this toun,'
quod he,

'Of this despit awroken for to be.
Allas,' quod he, 'allas, I ne hadde
y-bleynt.'

His hooté love was coold and al y-queynt;

For fro that tyme that he hadde kiste
her ers,

Of paramours he settè nat a kers ;
For he was heelèd of his maladie.
Full oftè paramours he gan deffie,
And weepe as dooth a child that is y-bete.
A softè paas he wente over the strete 3760
Until a smyth men clepèd daun Gerveys,
That in his forgé smythèd plough
harneys,—

He sharpeth shaar and kultour bisily.
This Absolon knokketh al esily,
And seyde, 'Undo, Gerveys, and that
anon.'

'What, who artow?' 'It am I, Ab-
solon.'

'What, Absolon! For Cristès sweetè tree,
Why risè ye so rathe? ey *benedicitee*!
What eyleth yow? Som gay gerl, God
it woot,

Hath brought yow thus upon the
viritoot; 3770

By seintè Note, ye woot wel what I menc.'

This Absolon ne roghtè nat a bene
Of al his pley; no word agayn he yaf;
He haddè moorè tow on his distaf
Than Gerveys knew, and seyde, 'Freend
so deere,

That hootè kultour in the chymenee heere,
As lene it me, I have therewith to doone,
And I wol brynge it thee agayn ful soone.'

Gerveys answerdè, 'Certès, were it
gold,

Or in a pokè nobles alle untold, 3780
Thou sholdest have, as I am trewè smyth;
Ey, Cristès foo, what wol ye do ther-
with?'

'Ther-of,' quod Absolon, 'be as be may,
I shall wel telle it thee to-morwè day,'
And caughte the kultour by the coldè stele.
Ful softè out at the dore he gan to stele,
And wente unto the carpenteris wal.
He cogheth first, and knokketh therewithal
Upon the wyndowe, right as he hide er.

This Alison answerdè, 'Who is ther,
That knokketh so? I warante it a thief.'

3770. *viritoot*, meaning doubtful—H *very* *trot*,
Camb. *microt*.

3771. *Note*, St. Neot.

3781. *Thou sholdest have*, II *Ye shul hem
have*.

'Why nay,' quod he, 'God woot, my
sweetè leef,

I am thyn Absolon, my deerèlyng.
Of gold,' quod he, 'I have thee brought
a ryng;

My mooder yaf it me, so God me save;
Ful fyn it is, and therto wel y-grave;
This wol I yevè thee, if thou me kisse.'

This Nicholas was risen for to pisse,
And thoughte he wolde amenden al the
jape, 3799

He sholdè kisse his ers, er that he scape;
And up the wyndowe did he hastily,
And out his ers he putteth pryvèly,
Over the buttoke to the haunchè bon.

And ther-with spak this clerk, this
Absolon;

'Spek, sweetè bryd, I noot nat where
thou art.'

This Nicholas anon leet fle a fart,
As greet as it had been a thonder dent,
That with the strook he was almost
y-blent;

And he was redy with his iren hoot,
And Nicholas amydde the ers he smoot.

Of gooth the skyn, an handè brede
aboutè, 3811

The hootè kultour brende so his toute;
And for the smert he wendè for to dye.
As he were wood for wo he gan to crye,
'Help, water, water, help, for Goddès
herte!'

This carpenter out of his slomber sterte,
And herde oon crien 'water,' as he were
wood,

And thoughte, 'Allas, now comth Nowelis
flood!'

He sit hym up withouten wordès mo,
And with his ax he smoot the corde atwo,
And doun gooth al; he foond neither to
selle, 3821

Ne breed ne ale, til he cam to the celle
Upon the floor and ther aswowne he lay.

Up stirte hire Alison and Nicholay,
And criden, 'Out and harrow!' in the
strete.

The neighèborès, bothè smale and grete,
In ronnen for to gauren on this man,
That yet aswownè lay, bothe pale and wan,
For with the fal he brosten hadde his arm.

But stonde he moste unto his owene harm,
 For whan he spak he was anon bore down
 With hendé Nicholas and Alisoun. 3832
 They tolden every man that he was wood,
 He was agast so of Nowelis flood
 Thurgh fantasie, that of his vanytee
 He hadde y-boght hym knedyng-tubbés
 thre,

And hadde hem hangéd in the rove above;
 And that he preydè hem, for Goddès love,
 To sitten in the roof, *par compaignye*.

The folk gan laughen at his fantasyc;
 Into the roof they kiken and they gape,
 And turned al his harm unto a jape; 3842
 For, what-so that this carpenter answerde,
 It was for noght, no man his reson herde;
 With othés grete he was so sworn adoun,
 That he was holdé wood in al the toun;
 For every clerk anonright heeld with
 oother;

They seyde, 'The man was wood, my
 leevé broother';

And every wight gan laughen of this stryf.
 Thus swyvel was this carpenteris wyf,
 For al his keypyng and his jalousye; 3851
 And Absolon hath kist hir nether eye,
 And Nicholas is scalded in the towte:
 This tale is doon, and God save al the
 rowte.

REEVE'S TALE

The prologe of the Reeves Tale

Whan folk hadde laughen at this nyccas

Of Absolon and hendé Nicholas,
 Diversé folk diversely they seyde,
 But for the mooré part they loughé and
 pleyde;

Ne at this tale I saugh no man hym greve,
 But it were oonly Oséwold the Reve. 3860
 By-cause he was of carpenteris craft
 A litel ire is in his herte y-laft.
 He gan to grucche and blaméd it a lite.

'So theek,' quod he, 'ful wel koude I
 the quite,

With bleryng of a proud millérès eye,—

3858. *moore, H moste.*

If that me listé speke of ribaudye,—
 But ik am oold, me list not pley for age,
 Gras tyme is doon, my fodder is now
 forage;

This whitè tope writeth myne oldè yeris;
 Myn herte is also mowld as myne heris,
 But if I fare as dooth an openers; 3871
 That ilkè fruyt is ever lenger the wers
 Til it be roten in mullok, or in stree.

'We oldè men, I drede, so farè we;
 Til we be roten kan we nat be rype.
 We hoppen ay whil that the world wol
 pype,

For in oure wyl ther stiketh ever a nayl,
 To have an hoor heed and a grenè tayl,
 As hath a leek; for, thogh oure myght
 be goon,

Oure wyl desireth folie ever in oon; 3880
 For whan we may nat doon, than wol we
 speke,

Yet in oure asshen olde is fyr y-reke.
 Foure gleedés han we, whiche I shal
 devyse,

Avaunting, lying, anger, coveitise.
 These fouré sparkles longen unto eelde.
 Oure oldè lemés mowe wel been unweelde,
 But wyl ne shal nat faillen, that is sooth;
 And yet ik have alwey a coltès tooth,
 As many a yeer as it is passéd henne
 Syn that my tappe of lif bigan to renne;
 For sikerly, whan I was bore, anon 3891
 Deeth drough the tappe of lyf and leet it
 gon,

And ever sithe hath so the tappe y-ronne,
 Til that almoost al empty is the tonne.

The stream of lyf now droppeth on the
 chymbe;

The sely tonge may wel ryngé and chymbe
 Of wrecchednesse that passéd is ful yore;
 With oldé folk, save dotage, is namoore.'

Whan that oure Hoost hadde herd this
 sermonyng,

He gan to speke as lordly as a kyng. 3900
 He seidè: 'What amounteth al this wit?
 What, shul we speke alday of hooly writ?
 The devel made a Revé for to preche,
 Or of a soutere shipman or a leche.

3871. *But if, H But yit.*

3887. *faillen, H fayle us.*

3904. *soutere, 'a cobbler may as well turn*

Seyforth thy tale, and tarie nat thetyme,—
Lo, Depcéford, and it is half wey pryme.
Lo, Grenéwyche, ther many a shrewe is
inne,

It were al tyme thy talé to bigynne.'

'Now, sirés,' quod this Oséwold the
Reve,

'I pray yow allé that ye nat yow greve,
Thogh I answére and somdeel sette his
howve,

For leveful is, with forcé force of showve;
This dronké Millere hath y-toold us heer
How that bigyléd was a carpenteer,
Peraventure in scorn for I am oon;
And, by youre leve, I shal him quite anon.
Right in his cherlés termés wol I speke;
I pray to God his nekké moté beke.
He kan wel in myn eyé seen a stalke,
But in his owene he kan nat seen a balke.'

Heere bigynneth The Reves Tale

At Trumpyngtoun, nat fer fro Canté-
brigge,

Ther gooth a brook, and over that a brigge,
Upon the whiché brook ther stant a melle;
And this is verray sooth that I yow tell.
A millere was ther dwellynge many a day,
As eny peccok he was proud and gay.
Pipen he koude and fissue, and nettés beete,
And turné coppés, and wel wrastle and
sheete;

And by his belt he baar a long panade,
And of a swerd ful trechant was the
blade.

sailor or physician as a reeve take to preaching.'
'Ex sutore nauclerus,' 'ex sutore medicus,' were
proverbial expressions.

3906. *Depcéford*, Deptford.

3906. *half wey pryme*, 7.30 A.M.; H, *passed
pryme*; Petworth, *almost prime*.

3910. *that ye nat yow greve*, II *that noon of
you him greve*.

3911. *howve*, cap.; for the phrase cp. line 586.

3912. *of*, i.e. off; H² *to*.

The Reves Tale: probably taken by Chaucer
from the French fabliau, *De Gombert et des Deux
Clers*, by Jean de Boves, with hints also from
another fabliau now in the library at Berne, in
which the clerks lodge with a thieving miller and
not with a 'vilein,' as in *Gompert*. Cp. also
Boccaccio, *Decameron*, D. ix. N. 6. All the
local colour is of course supplied by Chaucer
himself, who sets off the Cambridge clerks and
their miller against the Oxford clerk and the
carpenter.

A joly poppere baar he in his pouche,
Ther was no man, for peril, dorste hym
touche;

A Sheffield thwitel baar he in his hose.

Round was his face, and camuse was his
nose;

As piléd as an apé was his skulle;

Ifé was a market-betere atté fulle;

Ther dorsté no wight hand upon hym
legge,

That he ne swoor he sholde anon abegge.

A theef he was, for sothe, of corn and
melle,

And that a sly and usaunt for to stele.

His name was hooté, deynous, Symékyn.

A wyf he hadde, y-comen of noble kyn,—

The person of the toun hir fader was,—

With hire he yaf ful many a panne of brai.

For that Symkyn sholde in his blood allye.

She was y-fostred in a nonnerye,

For Symkyn woldé no wyf, as he sayde,

But she were wel y-norissed and a mayde,

To saven his estat of yomanrye.

And she was proud and peert as is a pyc.

A ful fair sighte was it upon hem two

On haly dayes; biforn hire wolde he go

With his tyet y-bounde about his heed;

And she cam after in a gyte of reed;

And Symkyn haddé hosen of the saine.

Ther dorsté no wight clepen hire but

'Dame';

Was noon so hardy that wente by the weye

That with hire dorsté rage, or onés pleye,

But if he wolde be slayn of Symékyn,

With panade, or with knyf, or boidékyn;

For jalous folk ben perilous evermo;

Algate they wolde hire wyvès wenden so.

And eek, for she was somdel smoterlich,

She was as digné as water in a dich,

As ful of hoker, and of bisémare.

Hir thoughté that a lady sholde hire spare,

What for hire kynrede and hir nortelrie,

That she hadde lernéd in the nonnerie.

3949. *of*, H and.

3953. *y-bounde*, E³ *bounde*, *bounden*; Heng.³
wounden.

3956. *clepen hire but 'Dame'*, H *clepe hir
but 'Madame'*; cp. line 376.

3957. *that wente*, H *walkyng*.

3958. *ones*, H *elles*.

3966. *a lady sholde hire spare*, H *ladyes
oughten hir to spare*, i.e. be considerate to.

A doghter haddē they bitwixe hem two,
Of twenty yeer, withouten any mo, 3970
Savyngē a child that was of half yeer age;
In cradel it lay, and was a propre page.
This wenchē thikke and wel y-grownen was,
With kamuse nose, and eyen greye as glas;
Buttokēs brode, and brestēs rounde and
hye,

But right fair was hire heer, I wol nat lye.

This person of the toun, for she was feir,
In purpos was to maken hire his heir,
Both of his catel and his mesuage, 3979
And straunge he made it of hir mariage.
His purpos was for to bistowe hire hye
Into som worthy blood of auncetrye;
For hooly chirchēs good moot been
descended

On hooly chirchēs blood that is descended;
Therefore he wolde his hooly blood honoure,
Though that he hooly chirchē sholde
devoure.

Gret sokene hath this millere, out of
doute,

With whete and malt of al the land aboute;
And namēliche, ther was a greet college,
Men clepen the Soler Halle at Cantē-
bregge; 3990

Ther was hir whete and eek hir malt
y-grounde.

And on a day it happēd in a stounde,
Sik lay the maunciple on a maladye--
Men wenden wisly that he sholdē dye,
For which this millere stal bothe mele
and corn

An hundred tymē moorē than biforn:
For ther-biforn he stal but curteisly,
But now he was a thief outrageously;
For which the wardeyn childe and madē
fare; 3999

But ther-of sette the millere nat a tare;
He craketh boost, and swoor it was nat so.

Thanne were ther yongē, pourē clerkēs
two,

That dwelten in this halle of which I seye;

3980. *Ac*, om. H.

3985. *hooly*, H *joly*.

3990. *Soler Halle*, the hall with the solers, or sun-chambers, i.e. rooms with bay-windows, probably King's Hall, one of the predecessors of Trinity College.

3996. *An hundred tyme*, H *a thousand part*.

3998. *was*, H *is*.

Testif they were, and lusty for to pleye;
And, oonly for hire myrthe and revelrye,
Upon the wardeyn bisily they crye,
To yeve hem levē, but a litel stounde,
To goon to mille and seen hir corn
y-grounde,

And hardly they dorstē leye hir nekke,
The millere shold nat stele hem half a
pckke 4010

Of corn, by sleightē, ne by force hem reve.
And at the laste the wardeyn yaf hem leve.
John highte that oon, and Aleyn highte
that oother;

Of o toun were they born, that hightē
Strother,

Fer in the North, I kan nat tellē where.

This Aleyn maketh redy al his gere,
And on an hors the sak he caste anon.
Forth goth Aleyn the clerk, and also John,
With good swerd and with bokeler by
hir side. 4019

John knew the wey, hem nededē no gyde;
And at the mille the sak adoun he layth.
Aleyn spak first, 'Al hayl, Symond,
y-fayth!

How fares thy fairē doghter, and thy wyf?'
'Aleyn, welcome,' quod Symkyn, 'by
my lyf!

And John also, how now? what do ye
heer?'

'Symond,' quod John, 'by God, nede
has na peer,

Hym boēs serve hym-self that has na
swayn,

Or elles he is a fool, as clerkēs sayn. 4028
Oure manciple, I hope he will be deed,
Swa werkēs ay the wangēs in his heed;
And forthy is I come, and eek Alayn,
To grynde our corn and carie it ham
agayn.

I pray yow spede us heythen that ye may.'

'It shal be doon,' quod Symkyn, 'by
my fay!

What wol ye doon, whil that it is in hande?'

'By God, right by the hopur wil I stande,'
Quod John, 'and se how that the corn
gas in.

4026. *na peer*. The two clerks speak through-out in northern dialect.

4027. *Hym boēs*, behoves him; H, *fallēs*; Camb. *mustē*; rest *bihoves*, *byhoveth*.

Yet saugh I never, by my fader kyn,
How that the hopur waggès til and fra.'

Aleynanswérdc, 'John, and wiltowswa?
Thanne wil I be bynethc, by my croun!
And se how that the melc fallès down
Into the trough,—that sal be my disport;
For John, y-faith, I may been of youre
sort,

I is as ille a millere as are ye.'

This millere smylcd of hir nycctee,
And thoghte, 'Al this nys doon but for
a wyle;

They wenè that no man may hem bigile;
But by my thrift yet shal I blere hir eye,
For al the sleighte in hir philosophye. 4050
The moorè queyntè crekès that they
make,

The moorè wol I stelè when I take.

In stide of flour yet wol I yeve hem bren;
The gretteste clerkès been noght wisest
men,

As whilom to the wolf thus spak the mare;
Of al hir art ne counte I noght a tare.'

Out at the dore he gooth ful pryvèly,
Whan that he saugh his tymc softely.
He looketh up and down til he hath founde
The clerkès hors, ther as it stood y-bounde
Bihynde the mille, under a levcsel, 4061
And to the hors he goth hym faire and
wel;

He strepeth of the brydel right anon,
And whan the hors was laus, he gynneth gon
Toward the fen, ther wildè marès renne,—
Forth with 'Wehee!' thurgh thikkè and
thurgh thenne.

This millere gooth agayn, no word he
seyde,
But dooth his note and with the clerkès
pleyde,

4046. *smyled of*, H *smyleth for*.

4051. *crekes*, H *knakkes*.

4053. *flour*, H *mele*.

4055. *As whilom*, etc. 'The story alluded to is told of a Mule in *Cent. Nov. Ant.* No. 91. The Mule pretends that his name is written upon the bottom of his hind-foot. The Wolf attempting to read it, the Mule gives him a kick on the forehead and kills him. Upon which the Fox, who was present, observes: *Ogni huomo, che sa lettera, non è savio*' (Tyrwhitt). A variant of the story occurs in *Reynard the Fox*.

4064. *gynneth*, H *gan to*.

4066. *and*, H *and cek*.

Til that hir corn was faire and weel
y-grounde;

And whan the mele is sakkcd and
y-bounde, 4070

This John goth out, and fynt his hors away,
And gan to crie, 'Harrow!' and, 'Weyl-
away!

Oure hors is lorn; Alayn, for Goddès banes
Stepe on thy feet; com out, man, al atanes!
Allas, our wardeyn has his palfrey lorn!
This Aleyn al forgat, bothe mele and corn;
Al was out of his mynde his housbondrie.
'What, whilk way is he geen?' he gan
to crie.

The wyf cam lepyngc inward with a ren;
She seyde, 'Allas, youre hors goth to
the fen 4080

With wildè mares, as faste as he may go;
Unthank come on his hand that boond
hym so,

And he that bettrè sholde han knyt the
reynè!'

'Allas,' quod John, 'Aleyn, for Cristès
peyne,

Lay down thy swerd, and I wil myn als wa.
I is ful wight, God waat, as is a rua;
By Goddès hertè! he sal nat scape us
bathe.

Why nadstow pit the capul in the lathe?
Il-hayl, by God, Aleyn, thou is a fonne.'

Thise sely clerkès han ful faste y-ronne
Toward the fen, bothe Aleyn and cek
John; 4091

And whan the millere saugh that they
were gon,

He half a busschel of hir flour hath take,
And bad his wyf go knede it in a cake.
He seyde, 'I trowe the clerkès were aferd;
Yet kan a millere make a clerkès berd,
For al his art; now lat hem goon hir weye!
Lo wher they goon; ye, lat the children
pleye;

They gete hym nat so lightly, by my
croun!'

Thise sely clerkes rennen up and down
With 'Keepe! keepe! stand! stand!
Jossa warderere! 4101

4090. *han ful faste y-ronne*, H *speeden hem anon*.

4095. *were*, H *ben*.

Ga wyghtly thou, and I shal kepe him
heere.'

But shortly, til that it was verray nyght,
They koudè nat, though they dide al hir
myght,

Hir capul cacche, he ran alwey so faste,
Til in a dych they caughte hym attè laste.

Wery and weet, as beest is in the reyn,
Comth sely John, and with him comth
Aleyn.

'Allas!' quod John, 'the day that I was
born !' 4109

Now are we dryve til hethyng and til scorn;
Oure corn is stoln, men wil us foolcs calle,
Bathè the wardeyn and oure felawes alle,
And namely the millere, weylaway !'

Thus pleyne John, as he gooth by
the way

Toward the mille, and Bayard in his hond.
The millere sittinge by the fyr he fond,—
For it was nyght and forther myghte they
noght,—

But for the love of God they hym bisoght
Of herberwe and of ese, as for hir peny.

The millere seyde agayn, "If ther be
eny," 4120

Swich as it is, yet shal ye have youre part;
Myn hous is streit, but ye han lernèd art,
Ye konne by argumentcs make a place
A mylè brood of twenty foot of space.

Lat se now if this placè may suffise,
Or make it rowm with speche, as is youre
gise.'

'Now, Symond,' seyde John, 'by Seint
Cutberd,

Ay is thou myrie, and this is faire answerd.
I have herd seyde, "Man sal taa of twa
thynges,

Slyk as he fyndes, or taa slyk as he
brynges";' 4130

But specially I pray thee, hoostè deere,
Get us som mete and drynke, and make
us cheere,

And we wil payen trefwely attè fulle;
With empty hand men may none haukcs
tulle;

Loo, heere our silver, redy for to spende.'

This millere into toun his doghter sende

4102. *wyghtly*, E⁶ *whistle*.

4105. *he ran alwey*, H *it ran away*.

For ale and breed, and rosted hem a goos,
And boond hire hors, it sholdè nat goon
loos,

And in his owene chambre hem made a
bed, 4139

With sheetcs and with chalons faire y-sprede,
Noght from his owene bed ten foot or
twelve.

His doghter hadde a bed al by hir-selve,
Right in the samè chambre by and by;

It myghtè be no bet, and causè why?
Ther was no rounner herberwe in the place.

Theysoupen, and theyspeke hem to solace,
And drynken ever strong ale attè beste.
Aboutè mydnyght wentè they to reste.

Wel hath this millere vernysshèd his
heed: 4149

Ful palche was for-dronken, and nat reed.
He yexeth, and hespeketh thurgh the nose,
As he were on the quakke or on the pose.
To bedde he goth, and with hym goth
his wyf,

As any jay she light was and jolyf;
So was hir joly whistle wel y-wet;
The cradel at hir beddcs feet is set,

Torokken, and to yeve the child to sowke;
And whan that dronken al was in the
crowke, 4158

To beddè went the doghter right anon;
To beddè wentè Aleyn, and also John;
Thernasna moore; hem needèd no dwale.

This millere hath so wisely bibbèd ale
That as an hors he snorteth in his sleepe;
Ne of his tayl bihynde he took no keepe;

His wyf bar him a burdon, a ful strong,
Menmyghte hir rowtyng heerèt wofurlong;
The wenchè rowteth eek, *par compaignye*.

Aleyn the clerk, that herd this melodye,
He pokèd John, and seyde, 'Slepestow?
Herdistow ever slyk a sang er now?' 4170

Lo, wilk a compline is y-mel hem alle!
A wildè fyr upon thair bodyes falle!

Wha herkned ever slyk a ferly thyng?
Ye, they sal have the flour of il endyng!

This langè nyght ther tydcs me na reste,
But yet, nafor; al sal be for the beste,
For, John,' seyde he, 'als ever moot
I thryve,

4138. *it sholdè nat goon*, H⁶ *he schold no more go*.

If that I may, yon wenché wil I swyve.
 Som esément has lawe y-shapen us ; 4179
 For, John, ther is a lawé that says thus,
 That gif a man in a point be y-greved,
 That in another he sal be releved.
 Oure corn is stoln, sothly it is na nay,
 And we han had an il fit al this day ;
 And syn I sal have neen amèdement
 Agayn my los, I wil have esément.
 By Goddes sale ! it sal neen other bee.'

This John answerde, 'Alayn, avysé thee ;
 The millere is a perilous man,' he seyde,
 'And gif that he out of his sleepe abreyde,
 He mighte doon us bathe a vileynye.' 4191
 Aleyn answerde, 'Icount hymnat a flye.'
 And up he rist, and by the wenché he
 crepte.

This wenché lay uprighte, and fasté slepte
 Til he so ny was, er she myghte espie,
 That it had been to laté for to crie ;
 And, shortly for to seyn, they were at on.
 Now pley, Aleyn, for I wol speke of John.

This John lith stillen furlong wey or two,
 And to hymself he maketh routhe and wo ;
 'Allas !' quod he, 'this is a wikked jape ;
 Now may I seyn that I is but an ape ;
 Yet has my felawesom what for his harm,
 He has the milleris doghter in his arm.
 He aunted hym, and has his nedés sped,
 And I lye as a draf sak in my bed ;
 And when this jape is tald another day,
 I sal been halde a daf, a cokénay.
 I wil arise and aunte it, by my fayth ;
 "Unhardly is unseely," thus men sayth.'

And up he roos and softely he wente 4211
 Unto the cradel, and in his hand it hente,
 And baar it softe unto his beddés feet.

Sooneafter this the wyf hir rowtyng leet,
 And gan awake and wente hire out to pisse,
 And cam agayn, and gan hir cradel mysse,
 And groped heer and ther, but she foond
 noon.

'Allas !' quod she, 'I hadde almost
 mysgoon ;
 I hadde almost goon to the clerkés bed.
 Ey, *benedicite !* thanne hadde I foule
 y-sped.' 4220

4183. *sothly*, E² *shortly*.

4199. *wry*, H *while*.

4200. *he maketh routhe and wo*, H *compleyned of his wo*.

And forth she gooth til she the cradel fond :
 She gropeth alwey forther with hir hond,
 And foond the bed and thoghté noght
 but good,

By-causé that the cradel by it stood,
 And nysté wher she was, for it was derk,
 But faire and wel she creepe into the clerk ;
 And lith ful stille and wolde han caught
 a sleepe.

Withinne a while this John the clerk up
 leepe, 4228

And on this goodé wyf he leith on soore ;
 So myrie a fit ne hadde she nat ful yore ;
 He priketh hardeand sooreas he weremad.
 This joly lyf han thise two clerkés lad,
 Til that the thriddé cok bigan to synge.

Aleyn wax wery in the dawényng,
 For he had swonken al the longé nyght ;
 And seyde, 'Fare weel, Malyne, sweeté
 wight.

The day is come, I may no lenger byde ;
 But evermo, wher so I go or ryde,
 I is thyn awen clerk, swa have I seel.'

'Now, deeré lemman,' quod she, 'go,
 fareweel !' 4240

But, er thou go, o thyng I wol thee telle ;
 When that thou wendest homward by the
 melle,

Right at the entree of the dore bihynde,
 Thou shalt a cake of half a bussel fynde,
 That was y-maked of thyn owene mele,
 Which that I heelpé my fader for to stele ;
 And, goodé lemman, God thee save and
 kepe !'

And with that word almoost she gan to
 wepe.

Aleyn up rist and thoughte, 'Er that
 it dawé,

I wol go crepen in by my felawe' ; 4250
 And fond the cradel with his hand anon.
 'By God !' thoughte he, 'al wrang I
 have mysгон ;

Myn heed is toty of my swynk to nyght,
 That maketh me that I go nat aright ;
 I woot wel by the cradel I have mysgo ;
 Heere lith the millere and his wyf also.'
 And forth he goth, a twenty devel way,
 Unto the bed ther as the millere lay.

4225. *And nyste*, H *Nat knowyng*.

4231. *soore*, H^o *deepe*.

He wende have copen by his felawe John,
And by the millere in he crepe anon, 4250
And caughte hym by the nekke, and softe
he spak ;

He seyde, 'Thou John, thou swyns-
heed, awak,

For Cristès saule, and heer a noble game ;
For by that lord that calléd is seint Jame,
As I have thriès in this shorté nyght
Swyvéð the milleres doghter bolt upright,
Whil thou hast as a coward been agast.'

'Ye, falsè charlot,' quod the millere, 'hast ?
A ! falsè traitour ! falsè clerk !' quod he,
'Thow shalt be deed, by Goddès dignitee !
Who dorstè be so boold to disparage 4271
Mydoghter, that is come of swich lynage ?'
And by the throtè-bolle he caughte Alayn ;
And he hente hym despitously agayn,
And on the nose he smoot hym with his
fest.

Down ran the bloody stream upon his brest,
And in the floor, with nose and mouth
to-broke,

They walwe as doon two piggès in a poke ;
And up they goon and doun agayn anon,
Til that the millere spornéd at a stoon,
And doun he fil bakward upon his wyf,
That wistè no thyng of this nycè stryf ;
For she was falle aslepe a litè wight
With John the clerk, that wakéd hadde
al nyght ;

And with the fal out of hir sleepe she
breyde.

'Help, hooly croys of Bromèholm,' she
seyde,

'*In manus tuas*, Lord, to thee I calle !
Awak, Symond ! the feend is on us falle !
Myn herte is broken ! help ! I nam but
deed !

Ther lyth oon upon my wombe and on
myn heed. 4290

Helpe, Symkyn, for the falsè clerkès fighte !'

This John stirte up, as soone as ever
he myghte,
And graspeþ by the wallès to and fro

4264. called, H *cleped*.

4272. swich, H *hili*.

4279. agayn, H *they goon*.

4280. sporned, H *stumbled*.

4286. Bromeholm, a Norfolk priory.

4288. is on us falle, H *is in thi halle*.

To fynde a staf, and she stirte up also,
And knewe the estrès bet than dide this
John,

And by the wal a staf she foond anon,
And saugh a litel shymeryng of a light,
For at an hole in shoon the moonè bright ;
And by that light she saugh hem bothè two,
But sikerly she nystè who was who ; 4300
But as she saugh a whit thyng in hir eye ;
And whan she gan the whitè thyng espye,
She wende the clerk hadde wered a
volupeer,

And with the staf she drough ay neer
and neer

And wende han hit this Aleyn at the fulle ;
And smoot the millere on the pyléd skulle,
And doun he gooth, and cride, 'Harrow !
I dye !'

These clerks beete hym weel and lete
hym lye,

And greythen hem, and tooke hir hors anon,
And eek hire mele, and on hir wey they
gon, 4310

And at the millè yet they tooke hir cake
Of half a bussel flour ful wel y-bake.

Thus is the proude millere wel y-bete,
And hath y-lost the gryndyng of the whete,
And payéd for the soper everideel
Of Aleyn and of John, that bette hym weel ;
His wyf is swyvéð, and his doghter als.
Lo ! swich it is a millere to be fals ;

And therfore this proverb is seyð fulsooth,
'Hym thar nat wenè wel that yvele dooth,'
A gylour shal hymself bigyléd be,— 4321
And God, that sitteth heighe in Trinitee,
Save al this compaigny, grete and smale.
Thus have I quyte the Millere in my tale.

COOK'S TALE

The prologe of the Cokes Tale

The Cook of Londoun, whil the Revé
spak,

4296. a staf she foond, H *sche took a staf*.

4297. shymeryng, H *glymeryng*.

4304. ay, H *hir*.

4309. greythen, equip ; H *greyth hem wel*.

4310. on hir wey, H *hoon anon*.

4311. at the mille yet, H *at the millen dore*.

4322. Trinitee, H⁶ *Magestee*.

For joye him thoughte he clawed him on
the bak ;

'Ha, ha !' quod he, 'for Cristès passioun
This millere hadde a sharpe conclusioun
Upon his argument of herbergage ;
Wel seyde Salomon, in his langage, ⁴³³⁰
"Ne brynge nat every man into thyn hous,"
For herberwyng by nyghte is perilous.
Wel oghte a man avysed for to be
Whom that he broghte into his pryvete.
I pray to God, so yeve me sorwe and care,
If ever, sitthe I highte Hogge of Ware,
Herde I a millere better y-set a werk ;
He hadde a jape of malice in the derk.
But God forbede that we stynt heere,
And therfore if ye vouchè-sauf to heere
A tale of me, that am a pourè man, ⁴³⁴¹
I wol yow telle, as wel as ever I kan,
A litel jape that fil in oure citee.'

Oure Hoost answerde and seide, 'I
graunte it thee ;
Nowtelle on, Roger, looke that it be good ;
For many a pastee hastow laten blood,
And many a jakke of Dovere hastow soold,
That hath been twiçshoot and twiçcoold ;
Of many a pilgrym hastow Cristès curs,
For of thy percelly yet they fare the
wors, ⁴³⁵⁰

That they han eten with thy stubbel goos ;
For in thy shoppe is many a flye loos.
Now telle on, gentil Roger by thy name.
But yet I pray thee be nat wroth for game,
A man may seye ful sooth in game and
pley.'

'Thou seist ful sooth,' quod Roger,
'by my fey !
But "sooth pley quaad pley," as the
Flemyng seith ;

And therfore, Herry Bailly, by thy feith,
Be thou nat wrooth, er we departen heer
Though that my tale be of an hostileer :
But nathèlees I wol nat telle it yit ; ⁴³⁶¹
But er we parte, y-wis, thou shalt be quit.'
And therwithal he lough and made cheere,
And seyde his tale, as ye shul after heere.

4335. *so geve me sorwe, H so gyf my body.*

4347. *a jakke of Dovere*, said to be 'a sea-fish,' but more probably a pudding.

4357. *sooth pley quaad pley*, true jest, bad jest. Cp. 'soth bourd is no bourd.'

Heere bigynneth The Cookes Tale

A prentys whilom dwelled in oure citee,
And of a craft of vitailliers was hee.
Gaillard he was as goldfynch in the shawe ;
Broun as a berye, a propre short felawe,
With lokkès blake, y-kempd ful fetisly.
Dauncen he koude so wel and jolily, ⁴³⁷⁰
That he was clepéd Perkyng Revelour.
He was as ful of love and paramour
As is the hyvè ful of hony sweete.
Wel was the wenchè with hym myghtè
meete ;

At every bridale wolde he synge and hoppe,
He lovèd bet the taverne than the shoppe.

For whan ther any ridyng was in Chepe,
Out of the shoppè thider wolde he lepe ;
Til that he haddè al the sighte y-seyn,
And dauncèd wel, he wolde nat come
ageyn ; ⁴³⁸⁰

And gadered hym a meynec of his sort,
To hoppe and synge and maken swich
disport ;

And ther they setten stevene for to
meete,

To pleyen at the dys in swich a streete ;
For in the toun ne was ther no prentys
That fairer koudè caste a paire of dys
Than Perkyng koude, and therto he was
free

Of his dispense, in place of pryvete.
That fond his maister wel in his chaffare,
For often tyme he found his box ful bare ;
For sikerly a prentys revelour, ⁴³⁹¹
That haunteth dys, riot, or paramour,
His maister shal it in his shoppe aby,
Al have he no part of the mynstralcy ;
For theste and riot they been convertible,
Al konne he pley on gyterne or ribble.
Revel and trouthe, as in a lowe degree,
They been ful wrothe al day, as men
may see.

This joly prentys with his maister bood,
Til he were ny out of his prentishood ;
Al were he snybbèd bothe erly and late,
And somtyme lad with revel to Newégate ;
But attè laste his maister hym bithoghte,

4370. *jolily*, H *prately*.

4373. *hyve ful*, H *hony-combe*.

4391. *sikerly a*, H *such a joly*.

4392. *riot*, H *revel*.

Upon a day, whan he his papir soghte,
Of a proverbe that seith this samé word,
'Wel bet is roten appul out of hoord,
Than that it rotie al the remènaunt.'
So fareth it by a riotous servaunt,
It is wel lassé harm to lete hym pace
Than he shende alle the servauntz in the
place.

Therefore his maister yaf hym acquittance,
And bad hym go with sorwe and with
meschance;

And thus this joly prentys hadde his leve.
Now lat him riote al the nyght or leve.
And for ther is no theef withoute a
lowke,
That helpeth hym to wasten and to sowke,

Of that he brybè kan or borwe may,
Anon he sente his bed and his array⁴⁴¹⁹
Unto a compier of his owene sort,
That lovède dys, and revel and disport,
And hadde a wyf that heeld for contenance
A shoppe, and swyved for hir suste-
nance . . .

*Of this Cokes Tale maked Chaucer
na more*

^{4422.} *Of this Cokes tale*, etc., from Hengwrt MS. In many MSS. here follows the 'Tale of Gamelyn, which Chaucer probably meant to re-write and assign to the Yeoman; but the tale, as it stands, is none of Chaucer's, and is therefore not printed here. The rest of the tales supposed to be told on the first day of the Pilgrimage are lacking, and, almost certainly, were never written.

TALES OF THE SECOND DAY

GROUP B

*The wordes of the Hoost to the
compaignye*

OURE Hostè saugh wel that the
brightè sonne
The ark of his artificial day hath ronne
The ferthè part, and half an houre and
moore,
And though he were nat depe experte in
loore,
He wiste it was the eightètethè day
Of Aprill, that is messenger to May;
And saugh wel that the shadwe of every
tree
Was, as in lengthe, the samé quantitee
That was the body erect that causèd it;
And therefore by the shadwe he took his
wit
That Phebus, which that shoon so clere
and brighte,

2. *his artificial day*, i.e. between sunrise and sunset as opposed to the day of 24 hours.

3. *The ferthè part*, etc. On April 18th (April 26th of the reformed calendar) the sun would have accomplished the fourth part of his day's journey at 9.20 A.M., leaving 40 minutes, or 'half-an-hour and more,' to 10 o'clock.

4. *experte*, om. H; *y-stert*, E².

11. *clere*, H *fair*.

Degrees was fyve and fourty clombe on
highte;

And for that day, as in that latitude
It was ten of the clokke, he gan conclude;
And sodeynly he plighte his hors aboute.

'Lordynges,' quod he, 'I warne yow,
al this route,

The fourthè party of this day is gon.
Now for the love of God and of Saint John,
Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye may.
Lordynges, the tymè wasteth nyght and
day

And steleth from us,—what pryvèly
slepynge,
And what thurgh negligence in oure
wakynge,—

As dooth the stream that turneth never
agayn,

Descendynge fro the montaigne into playn.
'Wel kan Senec, and many a philo-
sophre,

Biwillen tymè moore than gold in cofre;
For "losse of catel may recovered be,

12. *Degrees*, etc. The sun attained this altitude exactly at 9.58.

20. *the tyme*, etc. Initiated from the *Roman de la Rose*, cp. the English translation, ll. 369 sqq.

But losse of tymè shendeth us," quod he ;
It wol nat come agayn, withouten drede,
Namoorè than wole Malkynes mayden-
hede,

Whan she hath lost it in hir wantow-
nesse;

Lat us nat mowlen thus in ydelnesse.

'Sire Man of Lawe,' quod lîc, 'so have
ye blis,

Telle us a tale anon, as forward is ;

Ye been submytted thurgh youre free
assent

To stonden in this cas at my juggement.

Acquiteth yow and holdeth youre biheeste,
Thanne have ye doon youre devoir attè
leeste.'

'Hostè,' quod he, '*departieux* ich
assente ;

To brekè forward is nat myn entente. 40

Biheeste is dette, and I wole holdè fayn

Al my biheeste, I kan no bettrè sayn ;

For swich lawe as man yeveth another
wight

He sholde hym-selven usen it by right ;

Thus wole oure text ; but natheless certeyn

I kan right now no thrifty talè seyn,

But Chaucer, thogh he kan but lewedly,

On metres and on rymyng craftily,

Hath seyð hem, in swich Englissh as he
kan,

Of oldè tyme, as knoweth many a man. 50

And if he have noght seyð hem, levè
brother,

In o book, he hath seyð hem in another.

For he hath toold of loveris up and doun

Mo than Ovidè made of mencion

In his Epistellès, that been ful olde.

What sholde I tellen hem, syn they ben
tolde ?

'In youthe he made of Ceys and
Alcione,

And sithen hath he spoken of everichone

Thise noble wyvès and thise loveris eke.

Who so that wole his largè volume seke,

57. of *Ceys and Alcione*, the story of Ceys and Alcione, from Ovid, *Metam.* bk. xi. It forms the subject of ll. 62-220 of Chaucer's *Book of the Duchesse*, which may have been originally an independent poem. The *Book of the Duchesse* was written in 1368, when Chaucer was nearly thirty.

Clepèd the Seintès Legende of Cupide,
Ther may he seen the largè woundès wyde
Of Lucesse and of Babilan Tesbee ;

The swerd of Dido for the false Enee ;

The tree of Phillis for hire Demophon ;

The pleinte of Dianire and of Hermyon ;

Of Adriane and of Isiphilee ;

The bareyne ylè stondyng in the see ;

The dreyntè Leandrè for his Erro ;

The teeris of Eleyne ; and eek the wo 70

Of Brixseyde, and of the, Ladomya !

The crueltee of the, queene Mède !

Thy lîtel children hangyng by the hals,

For thy Jasón, that was in love so fals !

O Ypermystra, Penolopce, Alceste,

Youre wifhede he comendeth with the
beste !

'But certainly no word ne writeth he

Of thilkè wikke ensample of Canacee,

That loved hir owenè brother synfully ;

(Of swichè cursèd stories I sey fy !) 80

Or ellis of Tyro Appollonius,

How that the cursèd kyng Antiochus

Birafte his doghter of hir maydenhede,

That is so horrible a talè for to rede,

Whan he hir threw up on the pavèment ;

And therefore he, of ful avysèment,

Nolde nevere write in none of his sermons

Of swiche unkynde abhomynacions,

Ne I wol noon reherce, if that I may.

'But of my tale how shall I doon this
day ? 90

Me werè looth be likned, doutlees,

61. the *Seintes Legende of Cupide* (H *Legendes*), the *Legend of Good Women*, i.e. of Cupid's Saints. In the list which follows, the Man of Law omits the names of Cleopatra and Philomela, of whom Chaucer wrote, while of Deianira, Hermione, Hero, Helen, Briseis, Laodameia, Penelope and Alcestis no legends remain.

63. *Babilan Teshee*, Thisbe of Babylon.

67. *Adriane*, Ariadne.

67. *Isiphilee*, Hypsipyle.

68. *The bareyne yle*, Naxos.

74. *thy*, H *thilke*.

74. *in*, H *of*.

78. *Canacee*. 'This and the story of Apollonius of Tyre are told in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, whence it has been supposed that Chaucer intended here to blame that writer—a notion for which there appears to be no good foundation' (Wright).

80. *Of swiche*, H *On whiche*.

84. *for to*, H *as man may*.

To Muses that men clepe Pierides,—
Methamorphosios woot what I mene,—
 But nathêles, I recchê noght a bene,
 Though I come after hym with hawêbake;
 I speke in prose, and lat him rymês make.⁹
 And with that word, he with a sobré cheere
 Bigan his tale, as ye shal after heere.

MAN OF LAW'S TALE

The Prologe of the Manne of Lawes Tale

O hateful harm ! condicion of poverte !
 With thurst, with coold, with hunger so
 confoundid ! 100
 To asken help thec shameth in thyn herte;
 If thou noon askes so soore artow y-woundid,
 That verray nede unwrappeth al thy
 wounde hid !
 Maugreethyn heed, thou most for indigence
 Or stele, or begge, or borwê thy despence !

Thow blamest Crist, and seist ful bitterly,
 He mysdeparteth richesse temporal;
 Thy neighêbore thou wytest synfully,
 And seist thou hast to lite and he hath al.
 'Parfay,' seistow, 'somtyme he rekene
 shal, 110
 Whan that his tayl shal brennen in the
 gleede,
 For he noght helpeth needfulle in hir neede.'

Herkê what is the sentence of the wise:
 'Bet is to dyen than have indigence';
 Thy selvê neighêbor wol thee despise,
 If thou be poure, fawel thy reverence !
 Yet of the wisê man take this sentence:
 'Allê the dayes of pourê men been wikke';
 Be war therfore, er thou come to that
 prikke ! 119

If thou be poure thy brother hateth thee,
 And alle thy frendcês fleen from thee, allas !

92. *Pierides*, 'the daughters of Pierus, that contended with the Muses, and were changed into Pies, Ovid, *Metam.* v.' (Tyrwhitt).

99. ll. 99-103, 106-8, 112, 113-5, 118, 120-1, are imitated from the sixteenth chapter of Pope Innocent III.'s *De Contemptu Mundi*. The two Biblical quotations are from Ecclesi. xl. 29 and Prov. xiv. 20.

O richê marchauntz, ful of wele been yee,
 O noble, o prudent folk, as in this cas !
 Yourê baggês been nat fild with *ambês as*,
 But with *sys cynk*, that renneth for yourê
 chaunce ;

At Cristêmasse wel myrie may ye daunce !

Ye seken lond and see for yowre
 wynnynge ;

As wisê folk ye knowen all thestaat
 Of regnês ; ye been fadrês of tidynge
 And talês, bothe of pees and of debaat. 130
 I were right now of talês desolaat,
 Nere that a marchant—goon is many a
 yeere—

Me taughtea talê, which that yeshal heere.

*Heere begynneth The Man of Lawe his Tale

PART I

In Suriye whilom dwelte a compaignye
 Of chapmen riche, and therto saddle and
 trewe,
 That wyldê-where senten hir spicerye,
 Clothês of gold, and satyns riche of hewe.
 Hir chaffare was so thrifty and so newe
 That every wight hath deyntee to chaffare
 With hem, and eek to sellen hem hire ware.

Now fil it that the maistrês of that sort 141
 Han shapen hem to Romê for to wende,
 Were it for chapmanhode, or for disport,
 Noon oother message wolde they thider
 sende,
 But comen hem-self to Rome, this is the
 ende ;
 And in swich place as thoughte hem
 âvantage
 For hire entente, they take hir herbergage.

Sojourned han thise marchantz in that
 town
 A certain tyme, as fil to hire plesance ;

Heere begynneth, etc. The tale which follows is taken in the main from the Anglo-French Chronicle of Nicholas Trivet, an English Dominican who died some time after 1334. The translation is nowhere very close, and of the 1029 lines of which the tale consists, about 350 are Chaucer's additions' (Block).

And so bifel that the excellent renoun 150
Of the Emperours doghter, dame
Custance,
Reported was, with every circumstance,
Unto this Surryen marchantz in swich
wyse,
Fro day to day, as I shal yow devyse.

This was the commune voys of every
man :

'Oure Emperour of Rome, God hym see !
A doghter hath that, syn the world bigan,
To rekene as wel hir goodness as beautee,
Nas never swich another as is shee.
I prey to God, in honour hire susteene,
And wolde she were of all Europe the
queene ! 161

In hire is heigh beautee, withoute pride,
Yowthe, withoute grenehede or folye ;
To alle hire werkës vertu is hir gyde ;
Humblesse hath slayn in hire al tirannye ;
She is mirour of all curteisye,
Hir herte is verray chambre of hoolynesse,
Hir hand ministre of fredam for almesse.'

And al this voys was sooth, as God is
trewe ;

But now to purpos lat us turne agayn. 170
This marchantz han doon fraught hir
shippes newe,

And whan they han this blisful mayden
sayn,

Hoom to Surrye been they went ful fayn,
And doon hir nedes as they handoon yooore,
And lyven in wele ; I kansey yownamoore.

Now fil it that this marchantz stode
in grace

Of hym that was the sowdan of Surrye ;
For whan they cam from any strang place
He wolde of his benigne curteisye
Make hem good chiere and bisily espye 180
Tidynges of sondry regnes, for to leere
The wondres that they myghte seen or
heere.

Amonges othere thynges specially,
This marchantz han hym toold of dame
Custance

168. *for, H and.*

So greet noblesse in earnest, ceriously,
That this sowdan hath caught so greet
plesance

To han hir figure in his remembrance,
That all his lust, and al his bisy cure,
Was for to love hire while his lyf may dure.

Paraventure in thilk large book, 190
Which that men clipe the hevene, y-
written was

With sterres, whan that he his birth took,
That hefor lovesholde han his deeth, allas !
For in the sterres, clerer than is glas,
Is written, God woot, whoso koude it rede,
The deeth of every man, withouten drede.

In sterres many a wynter ther biforn
Was written the deeth of Ector, Achilles,
Of Pompei, Julius, er they were born,
The strif of Thebes, and of Ercules, 200
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The deeth ; but mennes wittes ben so dulle
That no myght kan wel rede it attē fulle.

This sowdan for his privee conseil sente,
And, shortly of this matiere for to pace,
He hath to hem declared his entente,
And seyde hem, certein, but he myghte
have grace

To han Custance withinne a litel space,
He nas but deed, and chargd hem in hie
To shapen for his lyf som remedye. 210

Diversē men diversē thynges seyden,
They argumenten, casten up and down ;
Many a subtil resoun forth they leyden ;
They speken of magyk and abusioun ;
But finally, as in conclusioun,
They kan nat seen in that noon avantage,
Ne in noon oother way, save mariage.

185. *ceriously*, glossed *ceriose* in E2, which
may be meant either for *serie* (seriously) or
seriatim (in order); Camb. *certainly*, Lansd.
curiously, H *so rially* (? for *serially*).

190. *Paraventure*. This and the next five
stanzas are Chaucer's own, and probably later
work. In ll. 197-201 he is imitating some lines
from the *Megacosmus* of Bernardus Sylvestris
beginning—

'Præcæpet in stellis series, quam longior ætas
Explicet et spatium temp'oris ordo suis.'

201. *Turnus*, the opponent of Æneas.

Thanne sawé they ther-inne swich
difficultee,

By wey of reson, for to speke al playn,
By-cause that ther was swich diversitee ²²⁰
Bitwene hir bothé lawés, that they sayn,
They trowé that 'no cristene prince wolde
fayn

Wedden his child under oure lawé sweete,
That us was taught by Mahoun, oure
prophete.'

And he answeárdé, 'Rather than I lese
Custance, I wol be cristnéd, doutéles;
I moot been hires, I maynoon oother chese.
I prey yow hoold youre argumentz in pees;
Saveth my lyf, and beth noght recchéles
To geten hire that hath my lyf in cure; ²³⁰
For in this wo I may nat longe endure.'

What nedeth gretter dilatacioun?
I seye, by tretys and embassadrie,
And by the popés mediacioun,
And al the chirche, and al the chivalrie,
That in destruccioun of maumetrie,
And in encrees of Cristés lawé deere,
They been acorded, so as ye shal heere:

How that the sowdan and his baronage,
And alle his liges, sholde y-cristnéd be,
And he shal han Custance in mariage, ²⁴¹
And certein gold, I noot what quantitee;
And heer-to founden sufficient suretee.
Thissame accord was sworn oneyther syde.
Now, faire Custance, almyghty God thee
gyde

Now woldé som men waiten, as I gesse,
That I sholde tellen al the purveiance
That themperoure, of his greté noblesse,
Hath shapen for his doghter, dame
Custance.

Wel may men knowen that so greet
ordinance ²⁵⁰

May no man tellen in a litel clause,
As was arrayed for so heigh a cause.

Bisshopes been shapen with hire for to
wende,

Lórdés, ladies, knyghtés of renoun,

230. *To geten*, H *Goth, geteth*.

231. *nat longe*, H *no longer*.

254. *Lordes*, Camb. *Lordyngis*.

And oother folk ynogh, this is the ende;
And notified is thurgh-out the toun
That every wight, with greet devocioun,
Sholde preyen Crist, that he this mariage
Receyve in gree and spedé this viage.

The day is comen of hir départyng—
I seye, the woful day fatál is come, ²⁶¹
That ther may be no lenger taryng,
But forthward they hem dresen alle and
some.

Custance, that was with sorwe al overcome,
Ful pale arist, and dreseth hire to wende,
For wel she seeth ther is noon oother ende.

Allas! what wonder is it thogh she wepte,
That shal be sent to strangé nacioun,
Fro freendés that so tendrely hire kepte,
And to be bounde under subjeccioun ²⁷⁰
Of oon she knoweth nat his condicioun?
Housbondes been allé goode, and han
ben yore;

That knowen wyves, I dar say yow na
moore.

'Fader,' she seyde, 'thy wrecched
child, Custance,
Thy yongé doghter, fostred up so softe,
And ye, my mooder, mysoverayn plesance,
Over allé thyng, out-taken Crist on lofte,
Custance, youre child, hire recomandeth
ofte

Unto your grace; for I shal to Surrye,
Ne shal I never seen yow moore with eye.

Allas! unto the Barbré nacioun ²⁸¹
I mooste anoon, syn that it is youre wille;
But Crist, that starf for our savacioun,
So yeve me grace his heestés to fulfille;
I, wrecché womman, noforstough I spille!
Wommen are born to thraldom and
penance
And to been under mannés governance.'

I trowe at Troye, when Pirrus brak
the wal

Or Ilion brende, at Thebes the citee,

282. *anoon*, E *goon*.

283. *savacioun*, H⁶ *redempcioun*.

289. *Ilion*, the citadel of Troy.

Nat Romé, for the harm thurgh Hanybal,
That Romayns hath venquýsshéd tymés
thre, ²⁹¹
Nas herd swich tendre wepyng for pitee,
As in the chambré was for hire partynge;
But forth she moot, wher so she wepe or
syngé.

O firsté moevyng, crueel firmament,
With thy diurnal sweigh that crowdest ay,
And hurlest al from Est til Occident,
That naturely wolde holde another way;
Thy crowdyng set the hevencin swich array
At the bigynnyng of this fiers viage, ³⁰⁰
That crueel Mars hath slayn this mariage!

Infortunat ascendent tortuous,
Of which the lord is helples, falle, allas,
Out of his angle into the derkeste hous.
O Mars, O atazir, as in this cas!
O fieble Moone, unhappy been thy pas!
Thou knytest thee ther thou art nat
receyved;
Ther thou were weel, fro thennés artow
weyved.

Imprudent emperour of Rome, allas! ³⁰⁹
Was ther no philosophre in al thy toun?
Is no tyme bet than oother in swich cas?
Of viage is ther noon eleccioun,
Namely to folk of heigh condicioun,
Noght whan a roote is of a burthe y-knowe?
Allas! we been to lewéd or to slowe!

To ship is brought this woful, fairé
mayde,
Solempnely, with every circumstance.

293. *partyngé*, E⁶ *departyngé*.
295. *O firsté moevyng*, etc. The *Primum Mobile* is the outermost of the nine spheres, and revolves daily from east to west, carrying the inner spheres with it.

304. *Out of his angle*. The angles were the highest parts of the sphere, and Mars had fallen from his angle to the lowest house in the sphere.

305. *atazir*, planetary influence.

312. *Of viage is ther noon eleccioun?* Only rich people could pay for the calculation of their horoscope from its 'root'; but, when the horoscope was made, the choice of a time for any business became easy, because it was known which planets would be favourable to the undertaker.

316. *brought*, E *came*.

'Now Jhesu Crist be with yow alle,'
she sayde.
Ther nys namooore, but 'Farewel, faire
Custance!' ³¹⁹
She peyneth hire to make good contenance;
And forth I lete hire saille in this manére,
And turne I wole agayn to my matère.

The mooder of the sowdan, welles of
vices,
Espied hath hir sonés pleyn entente,
How he wol lete his oldé sacrifices;
And right anon she for hir conseil sente;
And they been come, to knowé what she
mente;
And whan assembled was this folk in-fecre,
She sette hire down and seyde as ye shal
heere.

'Lordés,' she seyde, 'ye knowen
everichon, ³³⁰
How that my sone in point is for to lete
The hooly lawés of oure Alkaron,
Yeven by Goddés message Makomete;
But oon avow to greté God I heete,
The lyf shal rather out of my body sterte,
Than Makometés lawe out of myn herte!

What sholde us tyden of this newé lawe,
But thraldom to our bodies and penance,
And afterward in hellé to be drawe,
For we reneyed Mahoun oure creance?
But, lordés, wol ye maken assurance ³⁴¹
As I shal seyn, assentyngé to my loore,
And I shal make us sauf for everemoore.'

They sworn, and assenten every man
To lyve with hire, and dye, and by hire
stonde,
And everich, in the besté wise he kan,
To strengthen hire shal alle his frendés
fonde.

And she hath this emprise y-take on honde
Which ye shal heren that I shal devyse;
And to hem alle she spak right in this
wyse:

323. *welle*, H *full*.

330. *she seyde*, H⁶ *quod she*. The speeches are Chaucer's.

336. *Than*, H⁴ *Or*.

'We shul first feyne us cristendom to
take,³⁵¹
(Coold water shal nat greve us but a lite),
And I shal swiche a feeste and revel make,
That as I trowe I shal the sowdan quite;
For thogh his wyf be cristnéd never so
white

She shal havenede to wasshe away the rede,
Thogh she a font-ful water with hire lede!'

O sowdanesse, roote of iniquitee!
Virago thou, Semyrame the secounde,
O serpent, under femynynytee,³⁶⁰
Lik to the serpent depe in helle y-bounde!
O feynéd womman, al that may confounde
Vertu and innocence thurgh thy malice
Is bred in thee, as nest of every vice!

O Sathan, envious syn thilké day
That thou wert chacéd from oure heritage,
Wel knowestow to women the oldé way!
Thou madest Eva brynge us in servage,
Thou wolt fordoon this cristen mariage.
Thyn instrument so, weylaway the while!
Makestow of women whan thou wolt
bigile.³⁷¹

This sowdanesse, whom I thus blame
and warye,
Leet privly hire conseil goon hire way.
What sholde I in this talé lenger tarye?
She rydeth to the sowdan on a day,
And seyde hym that she wolde reneye
hir lay,
And cristendom of preestés handés fonge,
Repentyng hire she hethen was so longe;

Bisechyng hym to doon hire that honour,
That she moste han the cristen folk to
feeste,—³⁸⁰

'To plesen hem, I wol do my labour.'
The sowdan seith, 'I wol doon at youre
heeste';
And knelyng, thanketh hire of that
requeste;
So glad he was he nysté what to seye.
She kiste hir sone, and hoome she gooth
hir weye.

^{358.} *sowdanesse*, Sultaness. The apostrophe is Chaucer's.

^{360.} *under femynynytee*, in woman's form.

PART II

Arryvéed been this cristen folk to londe
In Surrye, with a greet solempné route;
And hastily this sowdan sente his sonde,
First to his mooder, and all the regne
abouté,
And seyde his wyf was comen, oute of
doute,³⁹⁰
And preyde hire for to ryde agayn the
queene,
The honour of his regnè to susteene.

Greet was the prees, and riché was tharray
Of Surryens and Romyans met yfcere.
The mooder of the sowdan, riche and gay,
Recyveth hire with al-so glad a cheere
As any mooder myghte hir doghter deere,
And to the nexté citce ther bisyde,
A softé paas solempnely they ryde.³⁹⁹

Noght trowe I the triumphe of Julius,—
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a
boost,—
Was roialler ne mooré curius,
Than was thassemblee of this blisful hoost;
Bút this scorpioun, this wikked goost,
The sowdanesse, for all hire flaterynge,
Caste under this ful mortally to styngé.

The sowdan comth hymself soone after this
So roially that wonder is to telle,
And welcometh hire with allé joye and blis;
And thus in murthe and joye I lete hem
dwelle;⁴¹⁰
The fruyt of this matiere is that I telle.
Whan tymé cam, men thoughte it for the
beste
That revel stynte and men goon to hirreste.

The tymé cam this oldé sowdanesse
Ordeynéd hath this feeste of which I tolde,
And to the feesté cristen folk hem dresse
In general, ye, bothé yonge and olde.
Heere may men feeste and roialtee biholde,
And deyntees mo than I kan yow devyse,
But all to deere they boghte it, er they ryse.

^{400.} *the triumphe of Julius*. The stanza is Chaucer's addition.

O sodeyn wo! that ever art successour
To worldly blisse! Spreynd is with
bitternesse

The ende of the joye of oure worldly
labour!

Wo occupieth the fyn of oure gladnesse.
Herkè this conseil, for thy sikernesse,
Upon thy gladè day have in thy mynde
The unwar wo, or harm, that comth
bihynde.

For schortly for to tellen, at o word,
The sowdan and the cristen everichone ⁴²⁰
Been al to-hewe, and stikèd at the bord,
But it were onoly dame Custance allone.
This oldè sowdanessè, cursèd krone!
Hath with hir freendès doon this cursèd
dede,
For she hir-self wolde all the contree lede.

Nether was Surryen noon, that was con-
verted,
That of the conseil of the sowdan woot,
That he nas al to-hewe er he asterted,
And Custance han they take anon, foot-
hoot,
And in a ship all steerèlees, God woot,
They han hir set and biddeth hire lerne
saille ⁴⁴⁰
Out of Surrye, agaynward to Ytaille.

A certein tresor that she thider ladde,
And, sooth to seyn, vitailè greet plentee,
They han hire yeven, and clothès eek she
hadde,
And forth she sailleth in the saltè see!
O my Custance, ful of benignytee,
O emperours yongè doughter deere,
He that is lord of fortune be thy steere!

She blesseth hire, and with ful pitous
voys, ⁴⁴⁹
Unto the croys of Crist thus seyde she:
'O cleere, O weleful auter, hooly croys,

Reed of the Lambès blood, ful of pitee,
That wesshe the world fro the olde
iniquitee,
Me fro the feend and fro his clawès kepe,
That day that I shal drenchen in the depe!

Victorious tree, proteccioun of trewe,
That onoly worthy werè for to bere
The Kyng of Hevene with his woundès
newe,
The whitè Lamb that hurt was with the
spere; ⁴⁵⁹
Flemere of feendès out of hym and here,
On which thy lynès feithfully extenden,
Me helpe, and yif me myght my lyf
tamenden.'

Yerès and dayès fleteth this créature
Thurghout thesee of Grece unto the straye
Of Marrok, as it was hire aventure.
On many a sory meel now may she
bayte;
After hir deeth ful often may she wayte,
Er that the wildè wawès wol hire dryve
Unto the placè ther she shal arryve.

Men myghten asken why she was nat
slayn? ⁴⁷⁰
Eek at the feeste who myghte hir body save?
And I answer to that demande agayn,
Who savèd Danyel in the horrible cave,
Ther every wight save he, maister and
knave,
Was with the leoun frete, er he asterte?
No wight but God, that he bar in his herte.

God liste to shewe his wonderful myracle
In hire, for we sholde seen his myghty
werkis.

Crist, which that is to every harm triacle,
Bycerteine meenès ofte, as knowen clerkis,
Dooth thyng for certein end that ful derk is
To mannès wit, that for oure ignorance
Ne konne noght knowe his prudent
purveiance.

Now sith she was nat at the feeste y-slawe,
Who kepte hire fro the drenchyng in the
see?

459. *the sphere*, H⁶ *a sphere*.
470-504. Chaucer's addition.

421. *O sodeyn wo!* The stanza is Chaucer's
addition, taken from the *De Contemptu Mundi*,
l. 23.

427. *or harm that comth*, H *that cometh ay*.

428. *schortly*, E *soothly*.

442. *thider*, E *with hire*.

449-62. Chaucer's addition.

Who kepté Jonas in the fisshés mawe,
 Til he was spouted up at Nynyvee?
 Wel may men knowe it was no wight
 but He
 That kepté peple Ebrayk from hir
 drenchyngé,
 With dryé feet thurgh-out the see passyngé.

Who bad the fouré spirites of tempest,
 That power han tanoyen lond and see,
 'Bothe north and south, and also west
 and est,
 Anoyeth neither see, ne land, ne tree'?
 Soothly the comandour of that was He
 That fro the tempest ay this womman kepte
 As wel when she awok as when she slepte.

Where myghte this womman mete and
 drynké have,
 Thre yeer and moore? how lasteth hire
 vitaile?
 Who fedde the Egypcien Marie in the cave,
 Or in desert? No wight but Crist, *sauz*
 faillé.
 Fyve thousand folk it was as greet mervaille
 With lovés fyve, and fisshés two, to feede.
 God sente his foyson at hir greté neede.

She dryveth forth into oure occian,
 Thurgh-out oure wildé see, til atté laste
 Under an hoold, that nempnen I ne kan,
 Fer in Northumberlond the wawe hire
 caste,
 And in the sond hir ship stikéd so faste
 That thennés wolde it noght of al a tyde.
 The wyl of Crist was that she sholde abyde.

The constable of the castel down is fare
 To seen this wrak, and al the ship he
 soghte,
 And foond this wery womman, ful of care;
 He foond also the tresor that she broghte.
 In hir langagé mercy she bisoghte,
 The lyf out of hire body for to twynne,
 Hire to deliveré of wo that she was inne.

493. See Rev. vii. 2, 3.

497. *awok*, F³ *awok*, throwing stress on *As*.

500. *the Egypcien Marie*, St. Mary of Egypt,
 who lived forty-seven years in the desert as a
 penitent.

A maner Latyn corrupt was hir speche,
 But algates ther-by was she understonde.
 The constable, whan hym lyst no lenger
 seche,
 This woful womman broghte he to the
 londé;
 She kneleth down and thanketh Goddés
 sonde;
 But what she was she woldé no man seye,
 For foul ne fair, thogh that she sholdé
 deye.

She seyde she was so mazéd in the see
 That she forgat hir myndé, by hir trouthe.
 The constable hath of hire so greet pitee,
 And eke his wyf, that they wepen for routhé.
 She was so diligent, withouten slouthé,
 To serve and plesé everich in that place,
 That alle hir loven that looken in hir face.

This constable and dame Hermengyld,
 his wyf,
 Were payens, and that contree everywhere;
 But Hermengyld loved hir right as hir lyf,
 And Custance hath so longe sojournéd
 there,
 In orisons, with many a bitter teere,
 Til Jhesu hath converted, thurgh his grace,
 Dame Hermengyld, constablesse of that
 place.

In al that lond no cristen dorsté route,
 Allé cristen folk been fled fro that contree,
 Thurgh payens, that conquereden al aboute
 The plagés of the North, by land and see.
 To Walys fledde the cristyanytee
 Of oldé Britons dwellynge in this ile;
 Ther was hir refut for the meené while.

But yet nere cristene Britons so exiled
 That ther nere somme, that in hir privètee
 Honoured Crist, and hethen folk bigiled;
 And ny the castel swiche ther dwelten
 three.
 That oon of hem was blynd and myghte
 nat see,

But it were with thilke eyen of his mynde,
 With whiche men seen whan that they
 ben blynde.

536. *sojourned*, H *herberwed*.

Bright was the sonne, as in that
someres day,
For which the constable and his wyf also,
And Custance, han y-take the righte way
Toward the see, a furlong wey or two,
To pleyen and to romen to and fro; 558
And in hir walk this blynd man they mette,
Croked and oold, with eyen faste y-shete.

'In name of Crist,' cridè this olde Britoun,
'Dame Hermengyld, yif me my sighte
agayn!'

This lady weex affrayed of the soun,
Lest that hir housbonde, shortly for to sayn,
Wolde hire for Jhesu Cristès love han
slayn;

Til Custance made hire boold, and bad
hire wirche

The wyl of Crist, as doghter of his chirche.

The constable weex abasshed of that sight,
And seyde, 'What amountethall thisfare!'
Custance answerde, 'Sire, it is Cristès
myght 570

That helpeth folk out of the feendessnare':
And so ferforth she gan oure lay declare,
That she the constable, er that it were eve,
Converteth, and on Crist maketh hym
bileve.

This constable was no-thing lord of this
place

Of which I speke, ther he Custance fond,
But kepte it strongly, many wyntres space,
Under Alla, kyng of al Northumbrelond,
That was ful wys and worthy of his hond,
Agayn the Scottès, as men may wel heere;
But turne I wole agayn to my mateere.

Sathan, that ever us waiteth to bigile,
Saug of Custance al hire perfeccioun,
And caste anon how he myghte quite hir
while,

And made a yong knyght, that dwelte
in that toun,

Love hire so hote, of foul affeccioun,
That verraily hym thoughte he sholdèspille
But he of hire myghte oncs have his wille.

567. *his*, H *holy*.

578. *Alla*, reigned A.D. 560-588.

He woweth hire, but it availleth noght,
She woldè do no synnè, by no weye; 590
And for despit he compassed in his thought
To maken hire on shameful deeth to deye.
He wayteth whan the constable was aweye,
And prively upon a nyght he crepte
In Hermengyldès chambre, whilsheslepte.

Wery, for-wakèd in hire orisouns,
Slepeth Custance, and Hermengyld also.
This knyght, thurgh Sathanas tempta-
ciouns,

All softly is to the bed y-go,
And kitte the throte of Hermengyld atwo,
And leyde the bloody knyf by dame
Custance, 601

And wente his wey, ther God yeve hym
meschance!

Soone after cometh this constable hoom
agayn,

And cek Alla, that kyng was of that lond,
And saugh his wyf despitously y-slayn,
For which ful ofte he weepe and wroong
his hond,

And in the bed the bloody knyf he fond
By dame Custance; alas! what myghte
she seye?

For verray wo, hir wit was al aweye.

To kyng Alla was toold al this meschance
And cek the tyme, and where, and in
what wise 611

That in a ship was founden this Custance,
As heer-biforn that ye han herd devyse.
The kyngès herte of pitee gan agryse,
Whan he saugh so benigne a creature
Falle in disese, and in mysaventure:

For as the lombtoward hisdeeth is broght,
So stant this innocent bfore the kyng.
This falsè knyght, that hath this tresoun
wroght,

Berth hire on hond that she hath doon
thys thyng; 620

But nathèeles, thér was greet moornyng

610-666. These eight stanzas are Chaucer's addition. In Trivet the king does not arrive till after the miracle.

612. *this*, E *dame*.

Among the peple, and seyn they kan nat
gesse
That she had doon so greet a wikkednesse:

For they han seyn hire ever so vertuous,
And lovynge Hermengyld right as hir lyf.
Of this baar witnessse everich in that hous,
Save he that Hermengyld slow with his
knif.

This gentil kyng hath caught a greet motyf
Of this witnessse, and thoghte he wolde
enquere

Depper in this, a trouthe for to lere. 630

Allas ! Custance, thou hast no cham-
pioun,

Ne fighte kanstow noght, so weylaway !
But he that starf for our redempcioun,
And boond Sathan,—and yet lith ther
he lay,—

So be thy stronge champion this day ;
For, but if Crist open myracle kithe,
Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as
swithe.

She sette hire down on knees and thus she
sayde

‘Immortal God, that savedest Susanne
Fro falsè blame, and thou, merciful mayde,
Mary I meene, doghter to Seint Anne, 641
Bifore whos child angelès synge Osanne,
If I be gillees of this felonye
My socour be, for ellis shal I dye !’

Have ye nat seyn som tyme a palè face
Among a prees, of hym that hath be lad
Toward his deeth, wher-as hym gat no
grace ?

And swich a colour in his face hath had,
Men myghte knowe his face that was bistad,
Amongès alle the faces in that route ; 650
Sostant Custance, and looketh hire aboute.

O quecnès, lyvyng in prosperitee !
Duchesses, and ye ladyes everichone !
Haveth som routhe on hire adversitee.
An emperourès doghter stant allone ;
She hath no wight to whom to make hir
mone !

636. *open, H³ upon thee, on thee.*

O blood roial, that stondest in this drede,
Fer been thy freendès at thy gretè nede !

This Alla, kyng, hath swich compas-
sioun,
As gentil herte is fulfid of pitee, 660
That from his eyen ran the water down.
‘Now hastily do fecche a book,’ quod he,
‘And if this knyght wol sweren how
that she

This womman slow, yet wol we us avyse
Whom that we wole that shal been our
justise.’

A Briton book written with Evaungiles
Was fet, and on this book he swoor anoon
She gilty was, and in the meenè whiles
An hand hym smoot upon the nekkè boon,
That down he fil atonès as a stoon ; 670
And bothe his eyen broste out of his face
In sighte of every body in that place !

A voys was herd in general audience
And seyde, ‘Thou hast desclaundred,
giltèlees,
The doghter of hooly chirche in heigh
presence ;

Thus hastou down, and yet holde I my
pees !’

Of this mervaille agast was al the prees ;
As mazèd folk they stoden everichone,
For drede of wrechè, save Custance allone.

Greet was the drede, and cek the
répentance, 680

Of hem that hadden wronge suspicioun
Upon this sely, innocent Custance ;
And for this miracle, in conclusioun,
And by Custances mediacioun,
The kyng, and many another in that place,
Converted was,—thankèd be Cristès grace !

This falsè knyght was slayn for his
untrouthe

By juggèment of Alla, hastify ;
And yet Custance hadde of his deeth
greet routhe ;

And after this Jhesus, of his mercy, 690
Made Alla wedden, ful solempnely,

670. *atonès, H anon right.*

This hooly mayden, that is so bright and sheene;
And thus hath Crist y-maad Custance a queene.

But who was woful:—if I shal nat lye—
Of this weddyng but Donegild and na mo,
The kynges mooder, ful of tirannye?
Hir thoughte hir cursèd hertè brast atwo,—
She woldè noght hir sonè had do so.
Hir thoughte a despit that he sholdè take
So strange a créature unto his make. 700

Me list nat of the chaf, ne of the stree,
Maken so long a tale as of the corn.
What sholdè I tellen of the roialtee
At mariage, or which cours goth biforn,
Who bloweth in the trumpe, or in an horn?
The fruyt of every tale is for to seye,
They ete, and drynke, and daunce, and
syngè and pleye.

They goon to bedde, as it was skile and
right,
For thogh that wyvès be ful hooly thynges,
They mostè take in pacience at nyght 710
Swiche manere necessities as been
plesynges
To folk that hany-wedded hem with rynges,
And leye a lite hir hoolynesse aside,
As for the tyme,—it may no bet bitide.

On hire he gat a knavè childe anon,
And to a bisshop, and his constable eke,
He took his wyf to kepe, whan he is gon
To Scotlandward, his foomen for to seke.
Now faire Custance, that is so humble
and meke,
So longe is goon with childè, til that stille
She halt hire chambre, abidyng Cristès
wille. 721

The tyme is come a knavè child shebeer,—
Mauricius at the fontstoon they hym calle.
This constable dooth forth come a
messenger,
And wroot unto his kyng, that cleped
was Alle,
How that this blisful tidyng is bifalle,

713. H and halvendel hir holynesse ley aside.

And othere tidynges spedeful for to seye.
He taketh the lettre and forth he gooth
his weye. 728

This messenger, to doon his avantage,
Unto the kynges mooder rideth swithe,
And salueth hire ful faire in his langage:
'Madame,' quod he, 'ye may be glad
and blithe,
And thanketh God an hundred thousand
sithe,
My lady queene hath child withouten doute,
To joye and blisse of al this regne aboute.

Lo, heere the lettrès selèd of this thyng,
That I moot bere with al the haste I may.
If ye wol aught unto youre sone the kyng,
I am youre servant bothè nyght and day.'
Donegild answerde, 'As now, at this
tyme, nay; 740
But heere al nyght I wol thou take thy reste.
To-morwè wol I seye thee what me leste.'

This messenger drank sadly ale and wyn,
And stolen were his lettrès pryvely,
Out of his box whil he sleep as a swyn,
And countrefeted was ful subtilly
Another lettrè, wrought ful synfully,
Unto the kyng direct, of this mateere,
Fro his constable, as ye shal after heere.

The lettrè spak, the queene delivered was
Of so horrible a feendly créature, 751
That in the castel noon so hardy was
That any whilè dorstè ther endure.
The mooder was an elf, by aventure,
Y-comen by charmès, or by sorcerie,
And every wight hateth hir compaignye.

Wo was this kyng whan he this lettre
had sayn,
But to no wight he tolde his sorwès soore,
But of his owene hand he wroot agayn:
'Welcome the sonde of Crist for ever-
moore, 760
To me that am now lernèd in his loore!

727. tidynges, H thynges.
746. countrefeted was ful, H countrefcet they were.
747. Another lettre, wrought, H Another sche him wrot.

Lord, welcome be thy lust and thy
plesaunce :

My lust I putte al in thyn ordinaunce.

Kepeth this child, al be it foul or feir,
And eek my wyf unto myn hoom-comyng;
Crist whan hym list may sende me an heir
Moore agreable than this to my likyng.
This lettre he selth, pryvely wepyng,
Which to the messenger was takē soone,
And forth he gooth; ther is na moore to
doone. 770

O messenger, fulfild of dronkenesse!
Strong is thy breeth, thy lymēs faltren ay,
And thou biwreyst allē secrenesse.
Thy mynde is lorn, thou janglest as a jay;
Thy face is turnēd in a newe array!
Ther dronkenesse regneth in any route,
Ther is no conseil hyd, withouten doute.

O Donégild! I ne have noon Englissh
digne

Unto thy malice and thy tyrannye,
And therfore to the fend I thee resigne,
Lat hym enditen of thy traitorie! 781
Fy, mannysh, fy,—Onay, by God, I lye,
Fy, feendlych spirit, for I dar wel telle,
Thogh thou heere walke, thy spirit is in
helle.

This messenger comth fro the kyngagayn,
And at the kyng's moodr's court helighte;
And she was of this messenger ful fayn,
And plesed hym, in al that evers hemyghte.
He drank, and wel his girdel underpighte;
He slepeth, and he snoreth in his gyse 790
All nyghtē, til the sonnē gan aryse.

Eft were his lettrēs stolen everychon,
And countrefetēd lettrēs in this wyse:
'The king comandeth his constable anon,
Up peyne of hangyng, and on heigh juyse,
That he ne sholdē suffren, in no wyse,
Custance in-with his reawmē for talyde
Thre dayēs and o quarter of a tyde;

771-784. The next two stanzas are Chaucer's addition from the *De Contemptu Mundi*, ii. 19.
798. *Thre dayes and o quarter of a tyde*, 'deynz quatre iours' (Trivet); as soon as the tide began to rise on the fourth day.

But in the samē ship as he hire fond,
Hire, and hir yongē sone, and al hir geere
He sholdē putte, and croude hire fro the
lond, 801

And chargen hire she never eft coome
there!

O my Custance, wel may thy goost have
feere,

And slepyng in thy dreem been in pen-
ance,

Whan Donégild cast al this ordinance.

This messenger on morwē, whan he wook,
Unto the castel halt the nextē way,
And to the constable he the lettrē took;
And whan that he this pitous lettrē say,
Ful ofte he seyde, 'Allas! and weylaway!'
'Lord Crist,' quod he, 'how may this
world endure? 811

So ful of synne is many a créature!

'O myghty God, if that it be thy wille,
Sith thou art rightful juge, how may it be
That thou wolt suffren innocentz to spille,
And wikked folk regne in prosperitee?
O goode Custance! Allas, so wo is me,
That I moot be thy tormentour, or deye
On shamēs deeth; ther is noon oother
weye.'

Wepen bothe yonge and olde in al
that place, 820

Whan that the kyng this cursēd lettrē
sente,

And Custance, with a deedly palē face,
The fērthē day toward the ship she wente;
But nathēlees she taketh in good entente
The wyl of Crist, and knelyng on the
stronde,

Sheseydē, 'Lord, ay welcome be thysonde;

He that me keptē fro the falsē blame,
While I was on the lond amongēs yow,
He kan me kepe from harm, and eek fro
shame,

In saltē see, al-though I se noght how. 830
As strong as ever he was he is yet now.

In hym triste I, and in his mooder deere,—
That is to me my seyl, and eek my
steere.'

Hir litel child lay wepyng in hir arm,
 And knelynge, pitously to hym she seyde,
 'Pees, litel sone, I wol do theenoon harm !'
 With that hir coverchief of hir heed she
 breyde,
 And over his litel eyen she it leyde,
 And in hir arm she lulleth it ful faste,
 And into hevене hire eyen up she caste.

'Mooder,' quod she, 'and maydē,
 bright Marie, 841
 Sooth is that thurgh womman's eggement
 Mankynde was lorn, and damnēd ay to dye,
 For which thy child was on a croys y-
 rent,—
 Thy blisful eyen sawe al his torment,—
 Thanne is ther no comparison bitwene
 Thy wo and any wo man may sustene.
 Thow sawe thy child y-slayn bifore thyn
 eyen,
 And yet now lyveth my litel child, *parfay* !
 Now, lady bright, to whom alle woful
 cryen,— 850
 Thow glorie of wommanhede, thow fairē
 May,
 Thow haven of refut, brightē sterre of
 day,—
 Rewe on my child, that of thy gentillesse
 Ruest on every reweful in distresse.

'O litel child, allas ! what is thy gilt,
 That never wroghtest synne as yet, *pardee* ?
 Why wil thyn hardē fader han thee spilt ?
 O mercy, deere constable,' quod she,
 'As lat my litel child dwelleheer with thee ;
 And if thou darst nat saven hym for blame,
 Yet kys hym onēs in his fadr's name !' 861
 Ther-with she lookēd bakward to thelonde,
 And seyde, 'Farewel, housbonde routhē-
 lees !'
 And up she rist, and walketh doun the
 stronde
 Toward the ship,—hir folweth al the
 pees,—
 And ever she preyeth hire child to hold
 his pees ;
 And taketh hir leve, and with an hooly
 entente,
 She blissēd hire and into ship she wente.

Vitaillēd was the ship, it is no drede,
 Iiabundantly for hire ful longē space ; 870
 And other necessities that sholdē nede
 She hadde ynogh, heryēd be Goddēs grace !
 For wynd and weder, almyghty God
 purchase !
 And bryngchirehoom, I kan nobettrēseye ;
 But in the see she dryveth forth hir weye.

PART III

Alla the kyng comth hoom soone after
 this
 Unto his castel of the which I tolde,
 And asketh where his wyf and his child is ?
 The constable gan aboute his hertē colde,
 And pleyndly al the manere he hym tolde,
 As ye han herd,—I kan telleit nobettre,—
 And sheweth the kyng his seclē and his
 lettre ;
 And seyde, 'Lord, as ye comanded me,
 Up peyne of deeth, so have I doon certein.'
 This messenger tormented was til he
 Mostē biknowe, and tellen, plat and pleyndly,
 Fro nyght to nyght in what place he had
 leyn ;
 And thus by wit and sobtil enquerynge
 Ymaged was by whom this harm gan
 sprynge.

The hand was knowē that the lettre
 wroot, 890
 And all the venym of this cursēd dede ;
 But in what wisē certainly I noot.
 Theffect is this, that Alla, out of drede,
 Iiis mooder slow,—that may men pleyndly
 rede,—
 For that she traitoure was to hire ligeance.
 Thus endeth oldē Donegild with mes-
 chance.

The sorwē that this Alla nyght and day
 Maketh for his wyf, and for his child also,
 Ther is no tongē that it tellē may ;
 But now wol I unto Custancē go, 900
 That fleteth in the see, in peyne and wo,

870. *ful longe space*, five years according to
 Trivet.
 873. *weder*, H *water*.

I'ye yeer and moore, as likèd Cristes sonde,
Er that hir ship approched unto the londe.

Under an hethen castel attè laste—
Of which the name in my text noght I fynde,—
Custance, and cek hir child, the see up caste.

Almyghty God, that saveth al mankynde,
Have on Custance and on hir child som mynde,
That fallen is in hethen hand eft-soon,
In point to spille, as I shal telle yow soone.

Doun fro the castel comth ther many a wight, 911
To gauren on this ship, and on Custance;
But, shortly, from the castel on a nyght,
The lordès styward,—God yeve him meschance !—

A theef, that hadde reneyed oure creance,
Came into the ship allone, and seyde he sholde
Hir lemman be, wher-so she wolde or nolde.

Wo was this wrecched womman tho bigon;
Hir childè cride, and she cride pitously;
But blisful Marie heelp hire right anon,
For with hir struglyng wel and myghtily,
The theef fil over bord al sodeynly,
And in the see he dreyntè for vengeance;
And thus hath Crist unwemmèd kept Custance !

O foulè lust of luxurie, lo, thyn ende !
Nat only that thoufeyntest mannès mynde,
But verrailly thou wolt his body shende.
Thende of thy werk, or of thy lustes blynde,
Is còmpleynyng. How many oon may men fynde
That noght for werk somtyme, but for thentente 930
To doon this synne, been outhur slayn or shente !

925-945. The next three stanzas are Chaucer's addition, again suggested by the *De Contemptu Mundi*, li. 21.

How may this waykè womman han this strengthe

Hire to defende agayn this renegat ?
O Goliath, unmeasurable of lengthe,
How myghtè David makè thee so maat ?
So yong and of aurore so desolaat,
How dorste he looke upon thy dredful face ?
Wel may men seen it nas but Goddès grace.

Who yaf Judith coràge or hardynesse
To sleen hym Olofernes in his tente, 940
And to deliveren out of wrecchednesse
The peple of God ? I seye, for this entente,
That right as God spirit of vigour sente
To hem, and savèd hem out of meschance,
So sente he myght and vigour to Custance.

Forth gooth hir ship thurgh-out the narwè mouth
Of Jubaltare and Septè, dryvyng alway,
Som-tyme West and som-tyme North and South,
And som-tyme Est, ful many a wery day,
Til Cristès mooder—blessed be she ay !—
Hath shapen, thurgh hir endèlees goodnesse, 951
To make an ende of al hir hevynesse.

Now lat us stynte of Custance but a throwe,
And speke we of the Romayn emperour,
That out of Surrye hath by lettres knowe
The slaughtre of cristen folk, and dishonour
Doon to his doghter by a fals traytour,—
I mene the cursèd wikked sowdanesse,
That at the feeste leet sleen both moore and lesse ;

For which this emperour hath sent anon
His senatour with roial ordinance, 961
And other lordès, God woot many oon,
On Surryens to taken heigh vengeance.
They brennen, sleen, and brynghe hem to meschance

947. *Jubaltare*, Gibraltar.

947. *Septè*, on the opposite coast. Trivet had made the 'hethen castel' (904) in Spain.

961. *senatour*. His name was Arsemeius.

Ful many a day, but, shortly, this is thende,
Homward to Rome they shapen hem to
wende.

This senatour repaireth with victorie
To Romé-ward, saillynge ful roially,
And mette the ship dryvyng, as seith
the storie,
In which Custancé sit ful pitously. 970
No-thing ne knew he what she was, ne why
She was in swich array; ne she nyl seye
Of hire estaat, although she sholdé deye.

He bryngeth hire to Rome, and to his wyf
He yaf hire, and hir yongé sone also;
And with the senatour she ladde hir lyf.
Thus kan oure lady bryngen out of wo
Woful Custance and many another mo;
And longé tymé dwelled she in that place,
In hooly werkés ever, as was hir grace.

The senatour's wyf hir aunté was, 981
But for all that she knew hire never the
moore.

I wol no longer tarien in this cas,
But to kyng Alla, which I spake of yore,
That wepeth for his wyf and siketh soore,
I wol retourne, and lete I wol Custance
Under the senatour's governance.

Kyng Alla, which that hadde his
mooder slayn,
Upon a day fil in swich répentance, 989
That, if I shortly tellen shal and playn,
To Rome he comth to receyven his
penance,
And putte hym in the popés ordinance,
In heigh and logh; and Jhesu Crist bisoghte
Foryevchis wikked werkés that he wroughte.

The fame anon thurghout the toun is
born,
How Alla kyng shal comen on pilgrymage,
By herbergours that wenten hym biforn;
For which the senatour, as was usage,
Rood hym agayns, and many of his lynage,

981. *hir aunté*, really her cousin. Accord-
ing to Trivet, Arseminius married Helen, daughter
of Sallustius, Constance's uncle.
995. *thurghout the toun*, H⁶ *thurgh Rome*
toun.

As wel to shewen his heighe magnificence,
As to doon any kyng a reverence. 1001

Greet cheeré dooth this noble senatour
To kyng Alla, and he to hym also;
Everich of hem dooth oother greet honour;
And so bifel that in a day or two
This senatour is to kyng Alla go
To feste, and, shortly, if I shal nat lye,
Custancés sone wente in his compaignye.

Som men wolde seyn at réqueste of
Custance
This senatour hath lad this child to
feeste, -- 1010
I may nat tellen every circumstance;
Be as he may, ther was he at the leeste;
But sooth is this, that at his moodrés heeste
Biforn Alla, duryng the metés space,
The child stood, lookyng in the kyng's
face.

This Alla kyng hath of this child greet
wonder,
And to the senatour he seyde anon,
'Whos is that fairé child, that stondesth
yonder?'
'I noot,' quod he, 'by God and by
Saint John! 1019
A mooder he hath, but fader hath he noon,
That I of woot'; but shortly, in a stounde
He tolde Alla how that this child was
founde;

'But God woot,' quod this senatour also,
'So vertuous a lyvere in my lyf
Ne saugh I never as she, ne herde of mo,
Of worldly wommen, maydé, ne of wyf;
I dar wel seyn hir haddé levere a knyf
Thurgh out hir brest, than ben a womman
wikke;
There is no man koude bryng hire to
that prikke.' 1029

Now was this child as lyke unto Custance
As possible is a créature to be.

1009. *Som men wolde seyn*, i.e. Trivet.

1010. *this child*. With the usual medieval
prodigality of time Trivet makes Maurice now
seventeen.

1014. *Biforn Alla*, H *Biforn hem alle*.

This Alla hath the face in remembrance
Of dame Custance, and theron mused he,
If that the childës mooder were aught she
That is his wyf, and pryvely he sighte,
And spedde hym fro the table that he
myghte.

'*Parfay!*' thoughte he, 'fantome is in
myn heed!

I oghte deme, of skilful juggement,
That in the saltë sec my wyf is deed';
And afterward he made his argument, ¹⁰⁴⁰
'What woot I, if that Crist have hyder
y-sent

My wyf by sec, as wel as he hire sente
To my contree fro thennës that she wente?'

And after noon, hoom with the senatour
Goth Alla, for to seen this wonderchaunce.
This senatour dooth Alla greet honour,
And hastily he sente after Custaunce;
But trusteth weel hire listë nat to daunce,
Whan that she wistë wherfore was that
sonde; ¹⁰⁴⁹

Unnethe upon hir feet she myghtë stonde.

Whan Alla saugh his wyf, faire he hire
grette,

And weep, that it was routhe for to see;
For at the firstë look he on hire sette,
He knew wel verraily that it was she,
And she for sorwe as dounbstant as a tree;
So was hir hertë shet in hir distresse
When she remembred his unkyndënese.

Twyës she swowned in his owene sighte.
He weep, and hym excuseth pitously:
'Now God,' quod he, 'and alle his
halwës brighte, ¹⁰⁶⁰

So wisly on my soul as have mercy,
That of youre harm as giltëles am I,
As is Maurice my sone, so lyk your face;
Ellës the feend me fecche out of this place!'

Long was the sobbyng and the bitter
peyne,
Er that hir woful hertës myghtë cesse;

1037. The stanza is Chaucer's addition.

1038. *skilful*, H *rightful*.

1051-1078. Chaucer's addition.

Greet was the pitce for to heere hem pleyne,
Thurgh whichë pleintës gan hir wo en-
cresse.

I pray yow all my labour to relese,
I may nat tell hir wo until to-morwe, ¹⁰⁷⁰
I am so wery for to speke of sorwe.

But finally, whan that the sothe is wist,
That Alla giltëles was of hir wo,
I trowe an hundred tymës been they kist;
And swich a blisse is ther bitwix hem two,
That, save the joye that lasteth evermo,
Ther is noon lyk that any créature
Hath seyn, or shal, whil that the world
may dure.

The preydë she hir housbonde, mekely,
In rélief of hir longë pitous pyne, ¹⁰⁸⁰
That he wolde preye hir fader specially,
That of his magestee he wolde enclyne
To vouchë-sauf som day with hym to dyne.
She preyde hym cek he woldë, by no weye,
Unto hir fader no word of hire seye.

Som men wold seyn how that the child
Mauice

Dooth this message unto the emperour,
But, as I gesse, Alla was nat so nyce
To hym, that was of so sovercyn honour
As he that is of cristen folk the flour, ¹⁰⁹⁰
Sente any child; but it is bet to deeme
He wente hymself, and so it may well
seeme.

This emperour hath graunted gentilly
To come to dyner, as he hym bisoughte,
And wel rede I, he lookëd bisily
Upon this child, and on his doghter thoughte.
Alla goth to his in, and as him oghte,
Arrayed for this feste in every wise,
As ferforth as his konnyng may suffice.

The morwë cam, and Alla gan hym
dresse, ¹¹⁰⁰
And eek his wyf, this emperour to meete;
And forth they ryde in joye and in
gladnesse;
And whan she saugh hir fader in the strete,
She lightë doun and falleth hym to feete;

1086. *Som men*, i.e. Trivet.

'Fader,' quod she, 'youre yongé child,
Custance,
Is now ful clene out of youre rémembrance.

I am youre doghter Custancé,' quod she,
'That whilom ye han sent unto Surrye.
It am I, fader, that in the salté see 1109
Was put allone, and dampned for to dye.
Now, goodé fader, mercy, I yow crye !
Sende me namoore unto noon hethénesse,
But thonketh my lord heere of his kyndé-
nesse.'

Who kan the pitous joyé tellen al
Bitwixe hem thre, syn they been thus
y-mette ?

But of my talé make an ende I shal,—
The day goth faste, I wol no lenger lette.
This glád folk to dyner they hem sette.
In joye and blisse at mete I lete hem dwelle,
A thousand fould wel moore than I kan
telle. 1120

This child Maurice was sithen emperour
Maad by the pope and lyvèd cristenly.
To Cristès chirchè he dide greet honour ;
But I lete all his storie passen by ;
Of Custance is my talé specially.
In the oldè Romane Geestès may men
fynde
Mauricés lyf, I bere it noght in mynde.

This kyng Alla, whan he his tymé say,
With his Custance, his hooly wyf so sweete,
To Engeland been they come the righté
way, 1130

Wher as they lyve in joye and in quite ;
But litel while it lasteth, I yow heete.
Joye of this world for tyme wol nat abyde,
Fro day to nyght it changeth as the tyde.

Who lyved ever in swich delit o day
That hym ne moevèd outhur conscience,
Or ire, or talent, or som kynnes affray,

1122. *Maad by the pope.* Trivet says by his grandfather 'par l'assent del pape Pelagie e de tout le senat de Rome.'

1126. *the olde Romane Geestes*, i.e. the *Gesta Romanorum*; H om. *the*.

1135. From *De Contemptu Mundi*, i. 22.

1137. *kynnes*, H *maner*.

Envye, or pride, or passion, or offence ?
I ne seye but for this endè this sentence,
That litel while in joye, or in plesance, 1140
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance ;

For Deeth, that taketh of heigh and logh
his rente,

Whan passed was a year, evene as I gesse,
Out of this world this kyng Alla he hente,
For whom Custance hath ful greet hevyn-
nesse.

Now lat us prayen God his soulé blesse !
And dame Custancé, finally to seye,
Toward the toun of Rome goth hir weye.

To Rome is come this hooly créature,
And fyndeth hire freendès ther bothe
hoole and sounde. 1150

Now is she scapèd al hire aventure,
And whan that she hir fader hath y-founde,
Doun on hir knees falleth she to grounde ;
Wepyng for tendrenesse in herté blithe,
She heriyeth God an hundred thousand
sithe.

In vertu and in hooly almus-dede
They lyven alle, and nevere asonder wende.
Til deeth departed hem this lyf they lede,
And fareth now weel, my tale is at an ende.
Now Jhesu Crist, that of his myght may
sende 1160

Joye after wo, governe us in his grace,
And kepe us allè that been in this place.

Amen.

[*Words of the Host, the Parson, and the Shipman*]

Oure Hoste upon his stiropes stode anon,
And seyde, 'Good men, herkeneth,
everichon !

This was a thrifty talé for the nones !
Sir Parish Prest,' quod he, 'for Goddès
bones,

1149. *hooly*, H *nobil*.

1163-1190. The text is taken from MS. Arch. Seld. B. 14, the only MS. which preserves the reading *Shipman* in line 1179.

1165. *a thrifty tale*, an allusion to the same phrase in B. 46, showing that the reference is to the Man of Law's Tale.

Tell us a tale, as was thy forward yore ;
I se wel that ye lerned men in lore
Can moché good, by Goddés dignitee !'

The Personehimanswérde, '*Benedicite!*
What eyleth the man so sinfully to
swere ?' 1171

Our Hoste answérde, 'O Jankyn, be
ye there ?

I smelle a Loller in the wind,' quod he.
'Nowe, good men,' quod our Hosté,
'herkneth me,

Abydeth, for Goddés digné passioun,
For we shul han a predicacioun ;
This Loller here wol prechen us somewhat.'

'Nay, by my fader soule ! that shal
he nat !'

Seydc the Shipman ; 'here shal he nat
preche ;' 1179

He shal no gospel glosen here, ne teche.
We leven alle in the grete God,' quod he,
'He woldé sowen som difficulte,

Or sprenge cokkel in our clené corn ;
And therfore, Hoste, I warné the biforn,

My joly body shal a talé telle,
And I shal clynken yow so mery a belle

That I shal wakyn al this companye ;
But it shal nat ben of philosophie,

Ne of phisyk, ne termés quicint of lawe ;
There is but litel Latin in my mawe.' 1190

SHIPMAN'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Shipmannes Tale

A marchant whilom dwelled at Seint
Denys,

That riché was, for which men helde
hym wys ;

A wyf he hadde of excellent beautee,

1173. *a Loller*, a Lollard. That Chaucer
allowed this name to be given to his good parson
does not prove that he sympathised with Wyclif's
doctrines. Any priest who lived a strict life just
then might incur the charge of Lollardy.

1174. *Nowe*, from H ; rest *Howe*.

1178. *my fader*, Arch. Seld. *godis*.

1179. *Shipman*, Heng.⁸ *Squier*, H *Sompnour*.

1183. *cokkel*, an allusion to the derivation of
Lollard from *lollum*.

1186-1190. *The Shipmannes Tale*. In Heng.⁸
here follows the Squire's Tale. No original of
the Shipman's Tale has yet been found.

And compaignable and revelous was she,
Which is a thyng that causeth more
dispence

Than worth is al the chiere and reverence
That men hem doon at festés and at
daunces. 1197

Swiche salutaciouns and contenaunces

Passen as dooth a shadwe upon the wal ;
But wo is hym that payen moot for al !

'Thesely housbonde algate he moste paye ;
He moot us clothe and he moot us arraye,

Al for his owene worship richely,
In which array we dauncé jolily.

And if that he noght may, par aventure,
Or ellis list no swich dispence endure,

But thynketh it is wasted and y-lost,
Thanne moot another payen for oure cost,

Or lene us gold, and that is perilous.'

This noblé marchaunt heeld a worthy
hous, 1210

For which he hadde alday so greet repair
For his largesse, and for his wyf was fair,

That wonder is ; but herkneth to my tale.

Amongés alle his gestés, grete and
smales,

Ther was a monk, a fair man and a
boold,—

I trowe of thritty wynter he was oold,—
That ever in oon was comynge to that
place.

This yongé monk, that was so fair of face,
Aqueynted was so with the goodé man

Sith that hir firsté knoweliché bigan, 1220
That in his hous as famulier was he

As it is possible any freend to be.

And for as muchel as this goodé man
And eek this monk, of which that I bigan,

Were bothé two y-born in o village,
The monk hym claymeth as for cosynage ;

And he agayn he seith nat onés nay,
But was as glad therof as fowel of day ;

For to his herte it was a greet plesaunce.
Thus been they knyht with eterne alliaunce,

And ech of hem gan oother for tassure 1231
Of bretherhede whil that hir lyf may dure.

1202. *and he moot us*, H *in ful good*.

1206. *list no*, H *will not*.

1210. *worthy*, H⁸ *noble*.

1217. *comynge*, H⁸ *drawyng*.

1222. *is*, om. F ; H reads as *it possble is a
friend to be*.

Free was Daun John, and namely of
dispenche,

As in that hous, and ful of diligence
To doon plesaunce, and also greet costage:
He noght forgat to yeve the leesté page
In al the hous; but after hir degree
He yaf the lord and sitthe al his meynee,
Whan that he cam, som manere honest
thyng,

For which they were as glad of his comyng
As fowel is fayn whan that the sonne
upriseth;

Na moore of this as now, for it suffiseth. ¹²⁴¹

But so bifel this marchant on a day
Shoop hym to maké redy his array
Toward the toun of Brugges for to fare,
To byen there a porcioun of ware;
For which he hath to Parys sent anon
A messenger, and preyed hath Daun John
That he sholde come to Seint Denys, to
pleye ¹²⁴⁹

With hym and with his wyf a day or tweye,
Er he to Brugges wente, in allé wise.

This noblemonk, of which I yowdevyse,
Hath of his abbot, as hym list, licence,—
By-cause he was a man of heigh prudence,
And eek an officer,—out for to ryde,
To seen hir graunges and hire bernés wyde,
And unto Seint Denys he comth anon.

Who was so welcome as my lord Daun
John,

Oure deeré cosyn, ful of curteisye?
With hym broghte he a jubbe of malvesye
And eek another, ful of fyn vernage, ¹²⁶¹
And volatyl, as ay was his usage.

And thus I lete hem etc and drynke and
pleye,

This marchant and this monk, a day or
tweye.

The thridde day this marchant up
ariseth,

And on his nedés sadly hym avyseth,
And up into his countour-hous gooth he,
To rekene with hymself, as wel may be,
Of thilké yeer, how that it with hym stood,
And how that he despended hadde his
good, ¹²⁷⁰

And if that he encesséd were or noon.
His bookés and his baggés, many oon,
He leith biforn hym on his countyng-bord.

Ful riché was his tresor and his hord,
For which ful faste his countour dore he
shette;

And eek he nolde that no man sholde
hym lette

Of his accountés, for the meené tyme;
And thus he sit til it was passéd pryme.

Daun John was rysen in the morwe alsé
And in the gardyn walketh to and fro, ^{128c}
And hath his thyngés seyde ful curteisly.

This goodé wyf cam walkyng pryvély
Into the gardyn, there he walketh softe,
And hym saleweth, as she hath doon ofte.
A maydè child cam in hire compaignye,
Which as hir list she may governe and gye,
For yet under the yerdé was the mayde.
'O deeré cosyn myn, Daun John,' she
sayde,

'What eyleth yow, so rathé for to ryse?'

'Necé,' quod he, 'it oghteynough suffice
Fyve houres for to slepe upon a nyght, ¹²⁹¹
But it were for an old appalléd wight,
As been thise wedded men that lye and
dare,

As, in a fourmè, sit a wery hare
Were al forstraught with houndés grete
and smale;

But, deeré necé, why be ye so pale?
I trowé certés that oure goodé man
Hath yow laboured sith the nyght bigan,
That yow were nede to resten hastily';
And with that word he lough ful murily
And of his owene thought he wax al reed.

This fairé wyf gan for to shake hir heed,
And seyde thus: 'Ye, God woot al,'
quod she,

'Nay, cosyn myn, it stant nat so with me,
For by that God that yaf me soule and lyf,
In al the reawme of France is ther no wyf
That lassé lust hath to that sory pleye;
For I may synge allas and weylawey
That I was born; but to no wight,'

quod she,

'Dar I nat telle how that it stant with me;
Wherefore I thyнке out of this lande to
wende, ¹³¹¹

Or ellés of myself to make an ende,
So ful am I of drede and eek of care.'

This monk bigan upon this wyf to stare,
And seyde, 'Allas, my necé, God forbede

That ye, for any sorwe or any drede,
 Fordo youreself; but tel me of youre grief;
 Paraventure I may in youre meschief ¹³¹⁸
 Conseille or helpe; and therfore telleth me
 All youre anoy, for it shal been secree;
 For on my porthors here I make an ooth
 That never in my lyf, for lief ne looth,
 Ne shal I of no conseil yow biwreyc.'

'The same agayn to yow,' quod she,

'I seye,

By God and by this porthors I yow swere,
 Though men me wolde al into pieces tere,
 Ne shal I never, for to goon to helle,
 Biwreyc a word of thyng that ye me telle,
 Nat for no cosynage ne alliance,
 But verrailly for love and affiance.' ¹³³⁰

Thus been they sworn, and heer-upon
 they kiste,
 And ech of hem tolde oother what hem
 liste.

'Cosyn,' quod she, 'if that I hadde
 a space,

As I have noon, and namely in this place,
 Thanne wolde I telle a legende of my lyf,
 What I have suffred sith I was a wyf
 With myn housbonde, al be he of youre
 kyn.'

'Nay,' quod this monk, 'by God,
 and Seint Martyn!

He is na moore cosyn unto me ¹³³⁹
 Than is this lief that hangeth on the tree.
 I clepe hymso, by Seint Denys of Fraunce!
 To have the moore cause of aqueyntaunce
 Of yow, which I have lovéd specially,
 Aboven allé women sikerly;
 This swere I yow on my professioun.
 Telleth youre grief, lest that he come adoun,
 And hasteth yow, and gooth youre wey
 anon.'

'My deeré love,' quod she, 'O my
 Daun John,

Ful lief were me this conseil for to hyde,
 But out it moot, I may namoore abyde! ¹³⁵⁰
 Myn housbonde is to me the worsté man
 That ever was sith that the world bigan,
 But sith I am a wyf, it sit nat me

To tellen no wight of oure privetee,
 Neither a-bedde ne in noon oother place—
 God shilde I sholde it tellen for his grace!
 A wyf ne shal nat seyn of hir housbonde
 But al honóur, as I kan understonde,
 Save unto yow, thus muche I tellen shal;
 As helpe me God, he is noght worth at al
 In no degree the value of a flye; ¹³⁶¹
 But yet me greveth moost his nygardye.
 And wel ye woot that wommen naturelly
 Desiren thynges sixe, as wel as I:
 They woldé that hir housbondes sholdé be
 Hardy and wise, and riche, and thereto free,
 And buxom unto his wyf, and fressh
 abedde;

But by that ilké Lord that for us bledde,
 For his honóur myself for to arraye,
 A Sunday next, I mosté nedés paye ¹³⁷⁰
 An hundred frankes, or ellis I am lorn;
 Yet were me levere that I were unborn
 Than me were doon a sclandre or
 vileynye;

And if myn housbonde eek it myghte espye
 I nere but lost, and therfore I yow preye,
 Lene me this somme, or ellis moot I deye.
 Daun John, I seye, lene me thise
 hundred frankes;

Pardee, I wol nat faillé yow my thankes,
 If that yow list to doon that I yow praye,
 For at a certeyn day I wol yow paye, ¹³⁸⁰
 And doon to yow what plesance and service
 That I may doon, right as yow list devise,
 And but I do, God take on me vengeance
 As foul as ever hadde Genyloun of France!'

This gentil monk answerde in this
 manere:

'Now trewely, myn owene lady deere,
 I have,' quod he, 'on yow sogreet arouthe,
 That I yow swere, and plighté yow my
 trouthe,

That than youre housbonde is to
 Flaunders fare

I wol delyvere yow out of this care; ¹³⁹⁰
 For I wol bryngé yow an hundred frankes';

^{1368.} H reads: *But by that lord that for us alle bledde.*

^{1370.} H reads: *A sonday next comyng yit moste I praye.*

^{1384.} *Genyloun*, the betrayer of Roland.

^{1387.} H reads: *I have on yow so greet pite and routhe.*

^{1317.} *tel*, H⁶ *telleth*.

^{1331.} *they kiste*, H⁴ *i-kiste, kist*.

^{1337.} *al be he of youre kyn*, H *though he be your cosyn*.

And with that word he caughte hire by
the flanks
And hire embraceth harde and kiste hire
ofte.

'Gooth now youre wey,' quod he, 'all
stille and softe,

And lat us dyne as soone as that ye may,
For by my chilyndre it is pryme of day.
Gooth now, and beeth as trewe as I shal
be.'

'Now ellës God forbedë, sire,' quod
she ;

And forth she gooth as jolif as a pye,
And bad the cookës that they sholde
hem hye, 1400

So that men myghtë dyne and that anon.
Up to hir housbonde is this wyf y-gon,
And knokketh at his countour boldëly.

'Qy la?' quod he. 'Peter ! it am I,'
Quod she ; 'what, sire, how longë wol
ye faste ?

How longë tymë wol ye rekene and caste
Yourë sommës, and yourë bookës, and
yourë thynges ?

The devel have part on alle swiche
rekenynges !

Ye have ynough, pardee, of Goddës sonde ;
Com down to-day, and lat yourë baggës
stonde. 1410

Ne be ye nat ashamëd that Daun John
Shal fasting al this day alengë goon ?
What ! lat us heere a messe, and go we
dyne !'

'Wyf,' quod this man, 'litel kanstow
devyne

The curious bisynnessë that we have ;
For of us chapmen,—al-so God me save,
And by that lord that clepid is Seint Yve,—
Scarsly amongës twelvë two shuln thryve,
Continuëly lastynge unto oure age. 1419
We may wel makë chiere and good visage,
And dryvë forth the world as it may be,
And kepen oure estaat in pryvëtee
Til we be deed ; or ellës that we pleye
A pilgrymage, or goon out of the weye ;
And therefore have I greet necessitee

1417. *Seint Yve*, Saint Ivo.

1418. *two*, E³ *ten*, Corp.³ *tweye*.

1423, 24. *we pleye A pilgrymage*, as a pretext
for keeping out of the way of creditors.

Upon this queyntë world tavyse me,
For, evermoorë we moote stonde in drede
Of hap and fortune in oure chapmanhede.

'To Flaundrës wol I go to-morwe at
day, 1429

And come agayn as soone as ever I may ;
For which, my deere wyf, I thee biseke
As be to every wight buxom and meke,
And for to kepe oure good be curious,
And honestly governë wel oure hous.
Thou hast ynough in every maner wise,
That to a thrify houshold may suffice ;
Thee lakketh noon array ne no vitaille,
Of silver in thy purs shaltow nat faille.'
And with that word his countour dore he
shette,

And down he gooth, no lenger wolde he
lette ; 1440

But hastily a messë was ther seyde,
And spedily the tables were y-leyde,
And to the dyner fastë they hem spedde,
And richëly this monk the chapman fedde.

At after dyner Daun John sobrëly
This chapman took apart and privëly
He seyde hym thus : 'Cosyn, it standeth
so

That, wel I se, to Bruggës wol ye go.
Godand Seint Austyn spedë yow and gyde !
I prey yow, cosyn, wisely that ye ryde ;
Governeth yow also of yourë diete 1451
Atemprëly, and namely in this hete.
Bitwix us two nedeth no strangë fare ;
Fare wel, cosyn, God shildë yow fro care !
And if that any thyng, by day or nyght,
If it lye in my power and my myght,
That ye me wol comande in any wyse,
It shal be doon, right as ye wol devyse.

'O thyng, er that ye goon, if it may be,
I woldë prey yow for to lenë me 1460
An hundred frankës for a wyke or tweye,
For certain beestës that I mostë beye,
To stoorë with a placë that is oures,—
God helpe me so, I wolde it werë yourës !
I shal nat faille surely of my day,
Nat for a thousand frankes a milë way !
But lat this thyng be secree, I yow preye,
For yet to-nyght thisë beestës moot I beye ;
And fare now wel, myn owene cosyn deere,

1438. *shaltow*, H⁴ *thou mayst*.

1445. *At*, H⁴ *And*.

Graunt mercy of youre cost and of youre
cheere !' 1470

This noble marchant gentilly anon
Answerd and seyde, 'O cosyn myn,
Daun John,

Now sikerly this is a smal requeste,
My gold is yourès whan that it yow leste,
And nat oonly my gold, but my chaffare;
Take what yow list, God shildè that ye
spare !

'But o thyng is, ye knowe it wel ynogh,
Of chapmen, that hir moncie is hir plogh;
We may creauncè whil we have a name,
But goldlees for to be, it is no game; 1480
Paye it agayn whan it lith in youre ese;
After mymyght ful fayn wolde I yow plesè.'

This hundred frankes he sette hym
forth anon

And prively he took hem to Daun John;
No wight in all this world wiste of this
loone,

Savynge this marchant and Daun John
allone.

They drynke, and speke, and rome a
while and pleye,

Til that Daun John rideth to his abbeye.

The morwè cam and forth this mar-
chant rideth

To Flaunders-ward,—his prentys wel
hym gydeth,— 1490

Til he cam into Bruggès murily.

Now gooth this marchant, faste and bisily
Aboute his nede, and byeth and creaun-
ceth;

He neither pleyeth at the dees, ne daun-
ceth,

But as a marchant, shortly for to telle,
He lad his lyf, and there I lete him dwelle.

The Sonday next this marchant was
agon,

To Seint Denys y-comen is Daun John,
With crowne and berde all fressh and
newe y-shave. 1499

In al the hous ther nas so litel a knave,
Ne no wight ellès, that he nas ful fayn
For that my lord Daun John was come
agayn;

And shortly, to the point right for to gon,
This fairè wyf accorded with Daun John

1483. *kyn*, om. H⁶.

That for thise hundred frankes he sholde
a nyght

Håve hire in his armès bolt upright;

And this acord parfournèd was in dede.

In myrthe al nyght a bisy lyf they lede
Til it was day, that Daun John wente
his way,

And bad the meynec, Fare wel, have
good day ! 1510

For noon of hem, ne no wight in the toun,
Hath of Daun John right no suspecioun;
And forth he rydeleth hoom to his abbeye,
Or where hym list; namoore of hym I
seye.

This marchant, whan that ended was
the faire,

To Seint Denys he gan for to repaire,

And with his wyf he maketh feeste and
cheere,

And telleth hire that chaffare is so deere
That nedès moste he make a chevyssaunce,
For he was bounden in a reconyssaunce,
To paye twenty thousand sheeld anon;
For which this marchant is to Parys gon,
To borwe of certeine freendès that he
hadde

A certeyn frankes; and somme with him
he ladde.

And whan that he was come into the toun,
For greet chiertee, and greet affeccioun,
Unto Daun John he gooth hym first, to
pleye,

Nat for to axe or borwe of hym moneye,—
But for to wite and seen of his welfare,
And for to tellen hym of his chaffare, 1530
As freendès doon whan they been met
y-feere.

Daun John hym maketh feeste and murye
cheere,

And he hym tolde agayn, ful specially,
How he hadde wel y-boght and gra-
ciously,—

Thankèd be God !—al hool his mar-
chandise,

Save that he moste, in allè maner wise,
Maken a chevyssaunce as for his beste,
And thanne he sholdè been in joye and
reste.

1528. H reads: *Nought for to borwe of hym
no kyn monay*, so Corp.³ omitting *kyn*.

Daun John answerdē, 'Certēs I am
fayn, 1539

That ye in heele ar comen hom agayn,
And if that I were riche, as have I blisse,
Of twenty thousand sheeld shold ye nat
mysse,

For ye so kyndely this oother day
Lentē me gold; and as I kan and may
I thankē yow, by God and by Seint Jame!
But nathēlees I took unto oure dame,
Youre wyf, at hom, the samē gold ageyn
Upon youre bench; she woot it wel certeyn,
By certeyn tokenes that I kan yow telle.
Now by youre leve I may no lenger
dwelle; 1550

Oure abbot wole out of this toun anon,
And in his compaignyē moot I goon.
Grete wel oure dame, myn owene necē
sweete,

And fare wel, deere cosyn, til we meete!
This marchant, which that was ful war
and wys,

Creanced hath and payd eek in Parys
To certeyn Lumbardes, redy in hir hond,
The somme of gold, and hadde of hem
his bond;

And hoom he gooth, murie as a papejay,
For wel he knew he stood in swich array
That nedēs moste he wynne in that viage
A thousand frankes aboven al his costage.

His wyf ful redy mette hym attē gate,
As she was wont of oold usage algate,
And al that nyght in myrthē they bisette;
For he was riche and cleerly out of dette.
Whan it was day this marchant gan
embrace

His wyfal newe, and kiste hire on hir face,
And up he gooth and maketh it ful tough.

'Namoore,' quod she, 'by God, ye
have ynough!' 1570

And wantownely agayn with hym she
pleyde;

Til attē lastē thus this marchant seyde:
'By God,' quod he, 'I am a litel wrooth
With yow, my wyf, although it be me
looth;

And woot ye why? By God, as that I
gesse

1549. *yow*, H⁴ *hir*.

1557. *Lumbardes*, Lombard money-dealers.

That ye han maad a manere straungēnesse
Bitwixen me and my cosyn daun John,—
Ye sholde han warnēd me, er I had gon,
That he yow hadde an hundred frankēs
payed,

By redy tokene,—and heeld hym yvele
apayed 1580

For that I to hym spak of chevysaunce,—
Me semēd so, as by his contenance—
But nathēlees, by God, oure hevene kyng,
I thoughtē nat to axen hym no thyng.

I prey thee, wyf, as do namoorē so;
Telle me alwey, er that I fro thee go,
If any dettour hath in myn absence
Y-payēd thee, lest thurgh thy negligence
I myghte hym axe a thing that he hath
payed.'

This wyf was nat aferēd nor affrayed,
But boldely she seyde, and that anon, 1591
'Marie, I deffie the falsē monk, Daun
John!

I kepe nat of his tokenes never a deel!
He took me certeyn gold, that woot I weel.
What, yvel thedam on his monkēs snowte!
For, God it woot, I wende withouten doute
That he hadde yewe it me bycause of yow,
To doon therwith myn honour and my
prow,

For cosynage, and eek for beelē cheere,
That he hath had ful oftē tymēs heere.

But sith I se I stonde in this disjoynt, 1601
I wol answerē yow shortly to the poynt.
Ye han mo slakkere dettours than am I,
For I wol paye yow wel and redily

Fro day to day, and if so be I faille,
I am youre wyf, score it upon my taille,
And I shal paye as soone as ever I may;
For by my trouthe, I have on myn array,
And nat on wast, bistowēd every deel;
And for I have bistowēd it so weel 1610
For youre honour, for Goddēs sake, I seye,
As be nat wrooth, but lat us laughe and
pleye.

Ye shal my joly body have to wedde;
By God! I wol nat paye yow but abedde.
For yive it me, myn owene spouse deere,
Turne hiderward, and maketh bettrē
cheere!'

This marchant saugh ther was no
remedie,

And for to chide it nere but greet folie,
 Sith that the thyng may nat amended be.
 'Now, wyf,' he seyde, 'and I foryeve
 it thee, ¹⁶²⁰
 But by thy lyf ne be namoore so large;
 Keepe bet oure good, this yeve I thee in
 charge.'

Thus endeth now my talc, and God us
 sende
 Talyngge ynough unto oure lyves ende.
Amen.

*Bihoold the murie wordes of the Hoost to
 the Shipman, and to the lady Prioressse*

'Wel seyde! by *corpus dominus*,
 quod our Hoost;
 'Now longè moote thou saillè by the cost,
 Sire gentil maister, gentil maryncer!
 God yeve this monk a thousand last
 quade yeer!
 A ha, felawes, beth ware of swiche a jape!
 The monk putte in the mannès hood an
 ape, ¹⁶³⁰
 And in his wyvès eek, by Seint Austyn!
 Draweth no monkès moore unto youre in.

'But now passe over, and lat us seke
 aboute,
 Who shal now tellè first of al this route
 Another tale'; and with that word he sayde,
 As curteisly as it had ben a mayde,
 'My lady Prioressc, by youre leve,
 So that I wiste I sholdè yow nat greve,
 I woldè demen that ye tellen sholde
 A talc next, if so were that ye wolde. ¹⁶⁴⁰
 Now wol ye vouchesauf, my lady deere?'

'Gladly,' quod she, and seyde as ye
 shal heere.

PRIORESS'S TALE

The Prologe of the Prioresses Tale

'O Lord, oure Lord, thy name how
 mervellous

^{1618.} nere but greet, H⁶ om. greet, H nas for nere.

^{1622.} oure, H⁵ my, Heng. thy.

^{1643.} O Lord, oure Lord, etc., the beginning of Ps. viii.

Is in this largè world y-sprad,' quod she;
 'For nocht oonly thy laudè precious
 Parfournèd is by men of dignitee,
 But by the mouth of children thy bountee
 Parfournèd is; for on the brest soukyng
 Somtyme shewen they thyn heriynge.

Wherefore, in laude as I best kan or may,
 Of thee, and of the whitè lylve flour, ¹⁶⁵¹
 Which that the bar and is a mayde alway,
 To telle a storie I wol do my laboure;
 Nat that I may encreessen hir honour,
 For she herself is honour and the roote
 Of bountee, next hir sone, and soulès
 boote.

O mooder mayde! O maydè mooder fre!
 O bussh unbrent, brennyng in Moyses
 sighte!

That ravysedest down fro the Deitee,
 Thurgh thyn humblesse, the Goost that in
 thalighte; ¹⁶⁶⁰
 Of whos vertu, whan He thyn hertè lighte,
 Conceyvd was the Fadrès sapience,
 Helpe me to telle it in thy reverence!

Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,
 Thy vertu, and thy grete humylitee,
 Ther may no tonge expresse in no sciënce;
 For somtyme, lady, er men praye to thee,
 Thou goost biforn of thy benygnytee,
 And getest us the lyght, thurgh thy preyere,
 To gyden us unto thy Sone so deere. ¹⁶⁷⁰

My konnyng is so wayk, O blisful queene,
 For to declare thy grete worthynesse,
 That I ne may the weightè nat sustene;
 But as a child of twelf monthe oold or lesse,
 That kan unnethès any word expresse,
 Right so fare I, and therfore I yow preye,
 Gydeth my song that I shal of yow seye.'

Heere bigynneth The Prioresses Tale

Ther was in Asye, in a greet citee,
 Amongès cristene folk, a Jewerye,

^{1667-1669.} Imitated from Dante, *Paradiso* xxxiii. 16-18, a passage from which, or from some Latin original, Chaucer had already borrowed in the proem to the 'Tale of St. Cecilia,' assigned in the *Canterbury Tales* to the second Nun.

The Prioresses Tale. A poem of a Paris beggar-

Sustenèd by a lord of that contrec, ¹⁶⁸⁰
 For foule usure and lucre of vileynye
 Hateful to Crist and to his compaignye;
 And thurgh the strete men myghte ride
 or wende,
 For it was free, and open at eyther ende.

A litel scole of cristen folk ther stood
 Down at the ferther ende, in which ther
 were
 Children an hecpe, y-comen of Cristen
 blood,
 That lernèd in that scolè yeer by yeer
 Swich manere doctrine as men usèd
 there,— ¹⁶⁸⁹

This is to seyn, to syngen, and to rede,
 As smalè children doon in hire childhede.

Among thise children was a wydwès sone,
 A litel clergeoun, seven yeer of age,
 That day by day to scolè was his wone;
 And eek also, where as he saugh thymage
 Of Cristès mooder, he hadde in usage,
 As hym was taught, to knele adoun and
 seye
 His *Ave Marie*, as he goth by the weye.

Thus hath this wydwe hir litel sone
 y-taught ¹⁶⁹⁹
 Oure blisful lady, Cristès mooder deere,
 To worshipec ay, and he forgate it naught,
 For sely child wol alday soonè leere,
 But ay whan I remembre on this mateere,
 Seint Nicholas stant ever in my presence,
 For he so yong to Crist dide reverence.

This litel child his litel book lernynge,
 As he sat in the scole at his prymer,
 He *Alma redemptoris* herdè synge,

boy murdered by a Jew for singing the anthem
 'Alma Redemptoris Mater,' is among the minor
 poems of the Vernon MS. and has been printed
 by the Chaucer and Early English Text Societies.
 In a French analogue, also printed by the Chaucer
 Society, the boy sings a 'Gaude, Maria.'

^{1687.} *lucre of vileynye*, glossed 'turpe lucrum,'
 E2: H *felonye*.

^{1699.} *sone*, H5 *child*.

^{1702.} The line quotes an old proverb.

^{1704.} *Seint Nicholas*, who fasted on Wednes-
 days and Fridays while at his mother's breast.

^{1708.} *Alma redemptoris [mater]*. Two hymns
 to the B. Virgin, beginning in this way, are still
 extant.

As children lernèd hire antiphoner;
 And, as he dorste, he drough hym ner
 and ner, ¹⁷¹⁰
 And herked ay the wordès and the noote,
 Til he the firstè vers koude al by rote.

Noght wiste he what this Latyn was to
 seye,
 For he so yong and tendre was of age;
 But on a day his felawe gan he preye
 Texpounden hym this song in his langage,
 Or telle him why this song was in usage;
 This preycde he hym to construe and
 declare
 Ful often time upon his knowès bare.

His felawe, which that elder was than
 he, ¹⁷²⁰
 Answerde hym thus: 'This song I have
 herd seye

Was makèd of oure blisful lady free,
 Ifire to saluc, and eek hire for to preye
 To been oure help and socour whan we
 deye;

I kan na moore expounde in this mateere,
 I lernè song, I kan but smal grammeere.'

'And is this song makèd in reverence
 Of Cristès mooder?' seyde this innocent.
 'Now certès, I wol do my diligence
 To konne it al, er Cristémasse is went, ¹⁷³⁰
 Though that I for my prymer shal be shent,
 And shal be beten thriès in an houre,
 I wol it konne oure lady for to honoure!'

His felawe taughte hym homward
 prively

Fro day to day, til he koude it by rote,
 And thanne he song it wel and boldely
 Fro word to word, acordynge with the note.
 Twiès a day it passèd thurgh his throte,
 To scolèward and homward whan he
 wente; ¹⁷³⁹

On Cristès mooder set was his entente.

As I have seyde, thurgh-out the Jewerie
 This litel child, as he cam to and fro,
 Ful murily than wolde he synge and crie
 O *Alma redemptoris* evermo.
 The swetnesse hath his hertè percèd so

Of Cristès mooder, that to hire to preye
He kan nat stynte of syngyng by the weye.

Oure firste foo, the serpent Sathanas,
That hath in Jew's herte his wasp's nest,
Up swal, and seide, 'O Hebrayk peple,
allas ! 1750

Is this to yow a thyng that is honest
That swich a boy shal walken as hym lest
In youre despit, and syng of swich
sentence,

Which is agayn youre law's reverence ?

Fro thennès forth the Jew's han con-
spired

This innocent out of this world to chace.
An homycide ther-to han they hyred,
That in an aleye hadde a privee place ;
And as the child gan forby for to pace,
This curséd Jew hym hente and heeld
hym faste, 1760
And kitte his throte, and ina pit hym caste.

I seye that in a wardrobe they hym threwe
Where as this Jew's purgen hire entraille.

O curséd folk, O Herod's al newe !
What may youre yvel ententé yow availle ?
Mordre wol out, certeyn, it wol nat faille,
And namely ther thonour of God shal
sprede.

The blood out-crieth on youre curséd dede.

O martir, sowded to virginitee ! 1769
Now maystowsyngen, folwyng ever in oon
'The whit Lamb celestial, quod she,
Of which the grete Ewangelist, Seint John,
In Pathmos wroot, which seith that they
that goon

Biforn this Lamb, and syng a song al
newe,

That never fleschly women they ne knewe.

This pouré wydweawaiteth al that nyght
After hir litel child, but he cam noght,

1754. *yourre*, E¹ *oure*.

1771. *quod she*. This is, I believe, the only instance in the *Canterbury Tales* in which Chaucer reminds us that we are reading the narrative of a narrative. The words show that the Tale was either written or revised after the idea of the *Canterbury Tales* had been conceived.

For which, as soone as it was day's lyght,
With face pale of drede and bisy thought,
She hath at scole and ellès-where hym
soght ; 1780

Til finally she gan so fer espie
That he last seyn was in the Jewerie.

With moodr's pitce in hir brest enclosed
She gooth, as she were half out of hir
mynde,

To every place where she hath supposed
By liklihedde hir litel child to fynde ;
And ever on Cristès mooder, meeke and
kynde,

She cride, and attè lasté thus she wroghte,
Among the curséd Jew's she hym soghte.

She frayneth and she preyeth pitously, 1790
To every Jew that dwelte in thilké place,
To telle hire if hir child wente oght forby.
Theyseydè 'Nay' ; but Jhesu, of his grace,
Yaf in hir thought inwith a litel space,
That in that place after hir sone she cryde,
Where he was casten in a pit bisyde.

O gretè God that parfournest thy laude
By mouth of innocent, lo, heere thy
myght !

This gemme of chastité, this emeraude,
And cek of martirdom the ruby bright, 1800
Ther he, with throte y-korven, lay upright,
He *Alma redemptoris* gan to syngè,
So loude, that all the place gan to ryngè !

The cristene folk, that thurgh the stretè
wente,

In comen, for to wondre upon this thyng ;
And hastily they for the provost sente.
He cam anon, withouten tarrying,
And herieth Crist that is of hevene kyng,
And eek his mooder, honour of mankynde,
And after that the Jew's leet he bynde.

This child, with pitous lamentacioun,
Up-taken was, syngyng his song alway ;
And with honour of greet processcioun
They carien hym unto the nexte abbay.
His mooder swownyng by his beerè lay ;
Unnethé myghte the peple that was there
This newè Rachel bryngè fro his bere.

With torment, and with shameful deeth
 echon,
 This provost dooth the Jewës for to sterve,
 That of this mordrê wiste, and that anon;
 He noldê no swich cursednesse observe;
 'Yvele shal have that yvele wol deserve';
 Therefore with wildê hors he dide hem
 drawe,
 And after that he heng hem by the lawe.

Upon his beere ay lith this innocent
 Biforn the chief auter, whil massê laste,
 And after that the abbot with his covent
 Han sped hem for to burien hym ful faste;
 And when they hooly water on hym caste,
 Yet spak this child, whan spreynd was
 hooly water, 1830
 And song, *O Alma redemptoris mater!*

This abbot, which that was an hooly
 man,
 As monkês been, or ellês oghtê be,
 This yongê child to conjure he bigan,
 And seyde, 'O deerê child, I halsê thee,
 In vertu of the hooly Trinitee,
 Tel me what is thy causê for to synge,
 Sith that thy throte is kut, to my
 semyng?' 1830

'My throte is kut unto my nekkê boon,'
 Seydê this child, 'and as by wey of kynde
 I sholde have dyed, ye, longê tyme agon;
 But Jhesu Crist, as ye in bookês fynde,
 Wil that his glorie laste and be in mynde,
 And, for the worship of his mooder deere,
 Yet may I synge *O Alma* loude and cleere.

'This welle of mercy, Cristês mooder
 sweete,
 I loved alwey, as after my konnyng,
 And whan that I my lyf sholdê forlete,
 To me she cam, and bad me for to synge
 This anthemic verrailly in my deyinge,
 As ye han herd, and whan that I hadde
 songe 1851
 Me thoughte she leyde a greyn upon my
 tonge:

Wherefore I synge, and syngê moot certeyn
 In honour of that blisful mayden free,

Til fro my tonge of-taken is the greyn;
 And after that thus seyde she to me,
 "My litel child, now wol I fecchê thee
 Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge
 y-take;
 Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake."

This hooly monk, this abbot, hym
 meene I, 1860
 His tonge out caughte and took away the
 greyn,
 And he yaf up the goost ful softly.
 And whan this abbot hadde this wonder
 seyn,
 His saltê teeris trikkled down as reyn,
 And gruf he fil, al plat upon the grounde,
 And stille he lay as he had ben y-bounde.

The covent eek lay on the pavêment,
 Wepyng and heryng Cristês mooder
 deere,
 And after that they ryse and forth been
 went,
 And taken away this martir from his
 beere; 1870
 And in a tombe of marbul stonês cleere,
 Enclosen they his litel body sweete:
 Ther he is now, God leve us for to meete!

O yongê Hugh of Lyncoln, slayn also
 With cursêd Jewes, as it is notâble,
 For it is but a litel while ago,
 Preye eek for us, we synful folk unstable,
 That of his mercy God, so merciable,
 On us his gretê mercy multiplie
 For reverence of his mooder, Marie.
Amen. 1880

*Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost to
 Chaucer*

Whan seyde was al this miracle, every
 man
 As sobre was that wonder was to se,
 Til that oure Hoostê japen tho bigan,
 And thanne at erst he looked upon me,

1868. *herying*, E² *heryen*.

1871. *tombe*, E *temple*.

1874. *yongê Hugh of Lyncoln*, said to have
 been crucified by the Jews in 1255.

what Chaucer doesn't do?

And seyde thus: 'What man artow?'
quod he;
'Thou lookest as thou woldest fynde an
hare;
For ever upon the ground I se thee stare.

Approché neer, and looke up murily.
Now war yow, sires, and lat this man
have place; 1889

He in the waast is shape as wel as I;
This were a popet in an arm tenbrace
For any womman, smal and fair of face.
He semeth elvyssh by his contenance,
For unto nowight dooth he daliaunce.

the Heere is a story
Sei now somewhat, syn oother folk han
sayd;

Telle us a tale of myrthe, and that anon.'
'Hoosté,' quod I, 'ne beth nat yvele
apayd,

For oother talé certés kan I noon,
But of a rym I lerned longe agoon.'

'Ye, that is good,' quod he, 'now
shul we heere 1900

Som deyntee thyng, me thynketh by his
cheere!'

CHAUCER'S TALE OF SIR THOPAS

*Heere bigynneth Chaucers Tale of
Thopas*

THE FIRST FIT

Listeth, lordes, in good entent,
And I wol tellé verrayment
Of myrthe and of solas;
Al of a knyght was fair and gent
In bataille and in tourneyment,
His name was sire Thopas.

Chaucer's Tale of Sir Thopas. 'The Rime of Sir Thopas was clearly intended to ridicule the "palpable gross" fictions of the common Rimer of that age, and still more, perhaps, the meanness of their language and versification. It is full of phrases taken from *Isumbras*, *Li Beaus Desconus*, and other romances in the same style, which are still extant' (Tyrwhitt).

Y-born he was in fer contree,
In Flaundrés, al biyonde the see,
At Popering, in the place; 1910
His fader was a man ful free,
And lord he was of that contree,
As it was Goddés grace.

Sire Thopas wax a doghty swayn;
Whit was his face as payndemayn,
His lippés rede as rose;
His rode is lyk scarlet in grayn,
And I yow telle in good certáyn
He hadde a semely nose.

His heer, his berd, was lyk saffroun,
That to his girdel raughte adoun; 1921
His shoon of cordéwane.
Of Bruggés were his hosen broun,
His robé was of syklatoun
That costé many a jane.

He koudé hunte at wildé deer,
And ride an haukyng for river
With grey goshawk on honde;
Ther-to he was a good archeer;
Of wrastlyng was ther noon his peer,
'Ther any ram shal stonde. 1931

Ful many a maydé bright in bour
They moorné for hym, *paramour*,
Whan hem were bet to slepe;
But he was chaast, and no lechour,
And sweete as is the brembul flour
That bereth the redé hepe.

And so bifel upon a day,
For sothe, as I yow tellé may,
Sire Thopas wolde out ride; 1940
He worth upon his steedé gray,
And in his hand a launcégay,
A long swerd by his side.

He priketh thurgh a fair forést
Ther-inne is many a wildé best,
Ye, bothé bukke and hare;
And as he priketh north and est,
I telle it yow, hym hadde almost
Bitidde a sory care.

1910. *Poperyng*, not far from Ostend.
1927. *for river*, i.e. by the river-side.

Ther spryngen herbès grete and smale,
The lycorys and cetewale 1951
And many a clowe-gylofre,
And notémuge to putte in ale,
Wheither it be moyste or stale,
Or for to leye in cofre.

The briddès syng, it is no nay,
The sparhawk and the papéjay,
That joye it was to heere.
The thrustelcok made eek hir lay,
The wodédowve upon the spray 1960
She sang ful loude and cleere.

Sire Thopas fil in love-longynge,
Al whan he herde the thrustel syng,
And pryked as he were wood ;
His fairé steede in his prikyng
So swattè that men myghte him wryng,
His sydès were al blood.

Sire Thopas eek so wery was
For prikyng, on the softè gras,—
So fiers was his corage,— 1970
That doun he leyde him in that plas
To make his steedè som solas,
And yaf hym good forage.

‘O seintè Marie, *benedicite* !
What eyleth this love at me
To byndè me so soore ?
Me dremèd al this nyght, *pardee*,
An Elf-queene shal my lemman be
And slepe under my goore.

‘An Elf-queene wol I love, y-wis, 1980
For in this world no womman is
Worthy to be my make
In towne.
Alle othere wommen I forsake,
And to an Elf-queene I me take
By dale and eek by downe.’

Into his sadel he clamb anon,
And priketh over stile and stoon
An Elf-queene for tespye ;
Til he so longe hadde riden and goon 1990
That he foond in a pryvè woon
The contree of Fairye,

1963. *thrustel*, H *brides*.

So wilde ;
For in that contree was ther noon
That to him dorstè ryde or goon,
Neither wyf ne childe ;

Til that ther cam a greet geaunt,
His namè was sire Olifaunt,
A perilous man of dede.
He seyde, ‘Child, by Termagaunt ! 2000
But if thou prike out of myn haunt,
Anon I sle thy steede
With mace !
Heere is the queene of Fairye,
With harpe, and pipe, and symphonye,
Dwellynge in this place.’

The child seyde, ‘Al-so moote I thee !
Tomorwe wol I meete with thee,
Whan I have myn armoure.
And yet I hopè, *par ma fay*, 2010
That thou shalt with this launcégay
Abyen it ful soure ;
Thy mawe
Shal I percen, if I may,
Er it be fully pryme of day,
For heere thou shalt be slawe.’

Sire Thopas drow abak ful faste ;
This geant at hym stonès caste
Out of a fel staf-slyng ;
But faire escapeth sire Thopas ; 2020
And al it was thurgh Goddès gras,
And thurgh his fair beryng.

Yet listeth, lordès, to my tale
Murier than the nightyngale,
For now I wol yow rowne
How sir Thopas, with sydès smale,
Prikyng over hill and dale,
Is comen agayn to towne.

His murie men comanded he
To make hym bothè game and glee, 2030
For nedès moste he fighte
With a geaunt, with hevedes three,
For *paramour* and jolitee
Of oon that shoon ful brighte.

1995. *That to him*, etc., from H only; E¹
omit.
2005. *pipe*, H *lute*.

'Do come,' he seyde, 'my mynstrales,
And geestours for to tellen tales,
Anon in myn armýnge ;
Of rómances that been roiales,
Of Popés and of Cardinales,
And cek of love-lykynge.' 2040

They fette hym first the sweete wyn
And mede eek in a mazelyn,
And roial spicerye ;
And gyngébreed that was ful fyn,
And lycorys, and eek comyn,
With sugre that is so trye.

He didé next his whité leere
Of clooth of laké, fyn and cleere,
A breech and eek a sherte ;
And next his sherte an akétoun, 2050
And over that an haubergcoun
For Percyngé of his herte ;

And over that a fyn hawberk,
Was al y-wroght of Jewés werk,
Ful strong it was of plate ;
And over that his cote-armour,
As whit as is a lilye flour,
In which he wol debate.

His sheeld was al of gold so reed,
And ther-inne was a borés heed, 2060
A charboelé lisyde ;
And there he swoor, on ale and breed,
How that the geaunt shal be deed,
'Bitydé what bityde !'

His jambeux were of quyrboilly,
His swerdés shethe of yvory,
His helm of laton bright ;
His sadel was of rewel boon ;
His brydel as the sonnè shoon,
Or as the moonè light. 2070

His spere it was of fyn ciprees,
That bodeth werre, and no-thing pees,
The heed ful sharpe y-grounde ;
His steedé was al dappull-gray,
It gooth an ambil in the way
Ful softely and rounde

2041. *fette*, E *sette*.

2046. *so*, om. H⁶.

In londe.
Loo, lordés myne, heere is a Fit ;
If ye wol any moore of it
To telle it wol I fonde. 2080

THE SECOND FIT

Now holde youre mouth, *par charitee*,
Bothé knyght and lady free,
And herkneth to my spelle ;
Of batailles and of chivalry,
And of ladyés love-drury,
Anon I wol youw telle.

Men speken of romauns of prys,—
Of Hornchild, and of Ypytos,
Of Beves and of sir Gy,
Of sir Lybeux and Pleyn-damour ; 2090
But sir Thopas he bereth the flour
Of roial chivalry !

His goodé steede al he bistrood,
And forth upon his wey he rood,
As sparle out of the bronde ;
Upon his creest he bar a tour,
And ther-inne stiked a lillie flour,—
God shilde his cors fro shonde !

And for he was a knyght auntrous,
He noldé slepen in noon hous, 2100
But ligen in his hooode ;
His brighté helm was his wonger,
And by hym baiteth his dextrer
Of herbés fyne and goode ;

Hym self drank water of the well,
As dide the knyght sire Percyvell,
So worthy under wede ;
Til on a day—

Heere the Hoost stynteth Chaucer of his Tale of Thopas

'Na moore of this, for Goddés
dignitee !' 2109

2085. *And of*, etc., H reads of lady's love and dreverye.

2089. *of sir Gy*, H⁵ om. *of*.

2090. *sir Lybeux*, Li. biaux desconneus, or Libius Disconius, 'the fair unknown.'

2094. *rood*, H⁶ *glod*.

Quod ouré Hosté, 'for thou makest me
So wery of thy verray lewédnesse
That, also wisly God my sowlé blesse,
Min érés aken of thy drasty speche.
Now swich a rym the devel I biteche !
This may wel be rym dogerel,' quod he.

'Why so?' quod I; 'why wiltow
letté me

Mòore of my talé than another man,
Syn that it is the besté ryme I kan?'

'By God,' quod he, 'for pleynly, at
a word,

Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a toord;
Thou doost noght ellés but despendest
tyme; 2121

Sire, at o word, thou shalt no lenger
ryme.

Lat se wher thou kanst tellen aught in
geeste,

Or telle in prosé somewhat, at the leeste,
In which ther be som murthe, or some
doctryne.'

'Gladly,' quod I, 'by Goddés sweeté
pyne !

I wol yow telle a litel thyng in prose
That oghté liken yow, as I suppose,
Or elles, certés, ye been to daungerous.
It is a moral talé vertuous, 2130
Al be it told somtyme in sondry wyse
Of sundry folk, as I shal yow devyse.

'As thus; ye woot that every
Evaungelist

That telleth us the peyne of Jhesu Crist
Ne seith nat alle thyng as his felawe dooth;
But nathelees hir sentence is al sooth,
And alle accorden as in hire sentence,
Al be ther in hir tellyng difference;
For somme of hem seyn moore, and
sommé lesse,

Whan they his pitous passioun expresse, --
I meene of Marké, Mathew, Luc and
John,-- 2141

But doutélees hir sentence is all oon.

'Therefore, lordyngés alle, I yow biseche
If that ye thynke I varie as in my speche,
As thus, though that I tellé somewhat moore
Of proverbés, than ye han herd bifoore

2118. *ryme*, E *tale*.

2131. *told*, E *take*.

2139. *lesse*, E* *seyn lesse*.

Comprehended in this litel tretys heere;
To enforcé with theffect of my mateere;
And though I nat the samé wordés seye,
As ye han herd, yet to yow alle I preye,
Blameth me nat, for as in my sentence 2151
Ye shul not fynden moché difference
Fró the sentence of this tretys lyte
After the which this murye tale I write;
And therefore herkneth what that I shal
seye,
And lat me tellen al my tale, I preye.'

CHAUCER'S TALE OF MELIBEUS

Heere bigynneth Chaucer's Tale of Melibee

A yong man called Melibeus, myghty
and riche, bigat upon his wyf, that
called was Prudence, a doghter which
that called was Sophie.

Upon a day bifel, that he for his
desport is went into the feeldes, hym
to pleye; his wyf and eek his doghter
hath he left inwith his hous, of which the
dores weren fast y-shette. [2160] Thre of
his olde foes han it espyed, and setten
laddres to the wallés of his hous, and by
the wyndowes been entred, and betten his
wyf, and wounded his doghter with fyve
mortal woundes in fyve sondry places,—
this is to seyn, in hir feet, in hir handes,
in hir erys, in hir nose, and in hire mouth,
--and leften hire for deed, and wenten
away.

Whan Melibeus retourned was into his
hous and saugh al this meschief, he, lyk a
mad man, rentynge his clothes, gan to
wepe and crie.

Prudence, his wyf, as ferforth as she
dorste, bisoghte hym of his wepyng for

2154. *murye*, H *litel*.

Chaucer's Tale of Melibee. This very dull
dissertation is taken from Jean de Meung's
French version of the *Liber Consolationis et
Consilii* of Albertano of Brescia, composed ca.
1238.

2157. *a doghter which that called was Sophie*,
the first of many decasyllabic cadences in the
early pages of Chaucer's prose.

to stynte; [2165] but nat for-ty he gan to crie and wepen ever lenger the moore.

This noble wyf Prudence remembred hire upon the sentence of Ovide, in his book that cleped is The Remedie of Love, where as he seith, 'He is a fool that destourbeth the mooder to wepen in the deeth of hire child, til she have wept hir fille, as for a certain tyme, and thanne shal man doon his diligence with amyable wordes hire to reconforte, and preyen hire of hir wepyng for to stynte.' For which resoun this noble wyf Prudence suffred hir housbonde for to wepe and crie as for a certain space; [2170] and whan she saugh hir tyme, she seyde hym in this wise: 'Allas, my lord,' quod she, 'why make ye youreself for to be lyk a fool! For sothe it aperteneth nat to a wys man to maken swiche a sorwe. Yourre doghter with the grace of God shal warisshe and escape; and, al were it so that she right now were deed, ye ne oughte nat, as for hir deeth, youreself to destroye. Senek seith, "The wise man shal nat take to greet discomfort for the deeth of his children, [2175] but, certes, he sholde suffren it in pacience as wel as he abideth the deeth of his owene propre persone."'

This Melibeus answerde anon, and seyde, 'What man,' quod he, 'sholde of his wepyng stente that hath so greet a cause for to wepe? Jhesu Crist, oure Lord, hymself wepte for the deeth of Lazarus hys freend.'

Prudence answerde, 'Certes, wel I woot attemprewe wepyng is no thyng deffended to hym that sorweful is amonges folk in sorwe, but it is rather graunted hym to wepe.

'The Apostle Paul unto the Romayns writeth, "Man shal rejoyse with hem that maken joye, and wepen with swich folk as wepen"; [2180] but though attemprewe wepyng be y-graunted, outrageous wepyng certes is deffended. Mesure of

wepyng sholde be conserved, after the loore that techeth us Senek: "Whan that thy frend is deed," quod he, "lat nat thyne eyen to moyste been of teeris, ne to muche drye; although the teeris come to thyne eyen, lat hem nat falle, and whan thou hast for-goon thy freend, do diligence to gete another freend, and this is moore wysdom than for to wepe for thy freend which that thou hast lorn, for ther-inne is no boote"; and therfore, if ye governe yow by sapience, put away sorwe out of youre herte. [2185] Remembre yow that Jhesus Syrak seith, "A man that is joyous, and glad in herte, it hym conserveth florissyng in his age, but soothly sorweful herte maketh hys bones drye." He seith eek thus, that sorwe in herte sleeth ful many a man. Salomon seith that "right as motthes in the shepes flees anyoeth to the clothes, and the smale wormes to the tree, right so anyoeth sorwe to the herte"; wherfore us oghte, as wel in the deeth of oure children as in the losse of othere goodes temporels, have pacience.

'Remembre yow up on the pacient Joh. Whan he hadde lost his children and his temporel substance, and in his body endured and receyved ful many a grevous tribulacion, yet seyde he thus: [2190] "Oure Lord hath yeve it me; oure Lord hath biraft it me; right as oure Lord hath wold, right so it is doon; blessed be the name of oure Lord!"'

To this foreseide thynges answerde Melibeus unto his wyf Prudence: 'Alle thy wordes,' quod he, 'been sothe, and therwith profitable, but trewely myn herte is troubled with this sorwe so greuously that I noot what to doone.'

'Lat calle,' quod Prudence, 'thy trewe freendes alle, and thy lynage whiche that been wise. Telleth youre cas and

2180. *conserved*, E⁸ *considered*, but the Latin text has *servandus*.

2180. *Senek*, *Ep.* lxiii. 1 and 9.

2185. *Jhesus Syrak*. A quotation from *Ecclus.* xxx. 25 is here omitted. The text occurs in *Prov.* xvii. 22.

2190. *Telleth youre cas*, H *telleth hem your grevaunce*.

2165. *Ovide*, in his book: *De Rem. Am.* i. 127-30.

2170. *Senek seith*: *Ep.* lxxiv. 29. This and other references are taken from Dr. Thor Sundby's edition of the Latin text (*Chauc. Soc.* 1873).

herkneth what they seye in conseillyng, and yow governe after hire sentence. Salomon seith, "Werk alle thy thynges by conseil, and thou shalt never repente."

Thanne by the conseil of his wyf Prudence this Melibeus leet callen a greet congregacioun of folk, [2195] as surgiens, phisiciens, olde folk and yonge, and somme of his olde enemys reconciled, as by hir semblaunt, to his love and into his grace, and therwithal ther comen somme of his neighbores that diden hym reverence moore for drede than for love, as it happeth ofte. Ther comen also ful many subtille flatereres, and wise advocatz, lerned in the lawe.

And whan this folk togidre assembled weren, this Melibeus in sorweful wise shewed hem his cas, and by the manere of his speche it semed wel that in herte he baar a cruell ire, redy to doon vengeance upon his foes, and sodeynly desired that the werre sholde bigynne, [2200] but natheles, yet axed he hire conseil upon this matiere.

A surgien, by licence and assent of swiche as weren wise, up roos and to Melibeus seyde as ye may heere: 'Sire,' quod he, 'as to us surgiens aperteneth that we do to every wight the beste that we kan, where as we been withholde, and to oure pacientz that we do no damage; wherfore it happeth many tyme and ofte that whan tway men han everich wounded oother, oon same surgien heeeth hem bothe; wherfore unto oure art it is nat pertinent to norice werre, ne parties to supporte. [2205] But certes, as to the warisshynge of youre doghter, al be it so that she perilously be wounded, we shullen do so ententif bisynesse fro day to nyght that with the grace of God she shal be hool and sound as soone as is possible.'

Almoost right in the same wise the phisiciens answerden, save that they seyden a fewe woordes moore; that right

as maladies been cured by hir contraries, right so shul men warisshc werre by vengeance.

His neighbores ful of envye, his feyned freendes that semeden reconciled, and his flatereres maden semblant of wepyng, and empeireden and aggregated muchel of this matiere, in preisynge greetly Melibee, of myght, of power, of riches, and of freendes, despisyng the power of his adversaries, [2210] and seiden outrely that he anon sholde wreken hym on his foes, and bigynne werre.

Up roos thanne an advocat that was wys, by leve and by conseil of othere that were wise, and seide, 'Lordynges, the nede for which we been assembled in this place is a ful hevvy thyng, and an heigh matiere, by cause of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath be doon, and eek by resoun of the grete damages that in tyme comynge been possible to fallen for this same cause, and eek by resoun of the grete riches and power of the parties bothe, [2215] for the whiche resouns it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matiere; wherfore, Melibeus, this is oure sentence; we conseilte yow aboven alle thyng, that right anon thou do thy diligence in kepyng of thy propre persone, in swich a wise that thou wante noon espie, ne wacche, thy body for to save; and after that we conseilte that in thyn hous thou sette sufficient garnisoun, so that they may as wel thy body as thyn hous defende; but certes, for to moeve werre, or sodeynly for to doon vengeance, we may nat demen in so litel tyme that it were profitable. Wherfore we axen leyser and espace to have delibera-cioun in this cas to deme, [2220] for the commune proverbe seith thus: "He that soone deemeth, soone shal repent"; and eek men seyn that thilke juge is wys that soone understondeth a matiere and jugged by leyser; for, al be it so that alle taryng be anoyful, algates it is nat to repreve in yevynge of judgement, ne

2190. thou shalt never repente, H the thar never rewe.

2190. of folk, H of peple.

2205. empeireden, H appeared.

2210. foes, and bigynne, H adversaries be begynnynge of.

in vengeance takyng, whan it is sufficeant and resonable; and that shewed oure Lord Jhesu Crist by ensample, for whan that the womman that was taken in avowtrie was brought in his presence to knowen what sholde be doon with hire persone,—al be it so that he wiste wel hymself what that he wolde answer,—yet ne wolde he nat answer sodeynly, but he wolde have deliberacioun, and in the ground he wroot twies; and by these causes we axen deliberacioun, and we shal thanne, by the grace of God, conseille thee thyng that shal be profitable.'

[2225] Up stirten thanne the yonge folk atones, and the mooste partie of that compaignye scorned the wise olde men, and bigonnen to make noyse, and seyden that 'Right so as, whil that iren is hoot, men sholden snyte, right so men sholde wreken hir wronges while that they been fresshe and newe'; and with loud voys they criden, 'Werre! werre!'

Up roos tho oon of thise olde wise, and with his hand made contenance that men sholde holden hem stille, and yeven hym audience.

'Lordynges,' quod he, 'ther is ful many a man that crieth "Werre! werre!" that woot ful litel what werre amounteth. Werre at his bigynnyng hath so greet an entryng and so large, that every wight may entre whan hym liketh and lightly fynde werre; [2230] but certes, what ende that shal ther-of bifalle it is nat light to knowe; for soothly, whan that werre is ones bigonne ther is ful many a child unborn of his mooder that shal sterve yong by cause of that ilke werre, or elles lyve in sorwe, and dye in wretchednesse; and therfore, er that any werre bigynne, men moste have greet conseil and greet deliberacioun.'

And whan this olde man wende to enforcen his tale by resons, wel ny alle atones bigonne they to rise for to breken his tale, and beden hym ful ofte his wordes for to abregge; for soothly, he that precheth to hem that listen nat heeren his wordes, his sermon hem

anoieth; [2235] for Jhesus Syrak seith, that 'musik in wepyng is a noyous thyng'; this is to seyn, as muche availleth to speken bifore folk to whiche his speche anoyeth, as doth to synge biforn hym that wepeth. And this wise man saugh that hym wanted audience, and al shamefast he sette hym down agayn; for Salomon seith, 'Ther as thou ne mayst have noon audience, enforce thee nat to speke.'

'I see wel,' quod this wise man, 'that the commune proverbe is sooth, "That good conseil wanteth whan it is moost nede."'

Yet hadde this Melibeus in his conseil many folk that prively in his cere counselled hym certeyn thyng, and counselled hym the contrarie in general audience.

[2240] Whan Melibeus hadde herd that the gretteste partie of his conseil weren accorded that he sholde maken werre, anon, he consented to hir conseillyng and fully affermed hire sentence.

Thanne dame Prudence, whan that she saugh how that hir housbonde shoope hym for to wreken hym on hise foes, and to bigynne werre, she in ful humble wise, whan she saugh hir tyme, seide to hym thise wordes.

'My lord,' quod she, 'I yow biseche, as hertely as I dar and kan, ne haste yow nat to faste, and for alle gerdons, as yeveth me audience; for Piers Alfonse seith, "Who so that dooth to that oother good or harm, haste thee nat to quiten it; for in this wise thy freend wole abyde, and thyn enemy shal the lenger lyve in drede." The proverbe seith, "He hasteth wel that wisely kan abyde, and in wikked haste is no profit."'

[2245] This Melibee answerde unto his wyf Prudence, 'I purpose nat,' quod he, 'to werke by thy conseil, for many causes and resouns; for certes, every wight wolde holde me thanne a fool.

2235. *is a noyous thyng*: 'Musica in luctu est importuna narratio' (Eccles. xxii. 6).

2240. *on hise foes*, H of his enemies.

2240. *Piers Alfonse seith*: *Disciplina Clericalis*, xxv. 15.

This is to seyn, if I, for thy conseillyng, wolde chaungen thynges that been ordeyned and affermed by so manye wyse. Secoundly, I seye that alle wommen been wikke, and noon good of hem alle; for, "Of a thousand men," seith Salomon, "I foond a good man, but certes, of alle wommen, good womman foond I nevere"; and also, certes, if I governed me by thy conseil, it sholde seme that I hadde yeve to thee over me the maistrie, and God forbode that it so were! for Jhesus Syrak seith, that if the wyf have maistrie she is contrarious to hir housbonde; [2250] and Salomon seith, "Never in thy lyf, to thy wyf, ne to thy child, ne to thy freend, ne yeve no power over thyself, for better it were that thy children aske of thy persone thynges that hem nedeth than thou be thyself in the handes of thy children"; and if I wolde werke by thy conseillyng, certes, my conseillyng moste som tyme be secree til it were tyme that it moste be knowe, and this ne may noght be. For it is written, "The janglerie of women can hide thyngis that they wot nought"; furthermore, the philosophre saith, "In wykke conseyll women venquysse men"; and for these reasons I ought not to make use of thy counsel.'

Whanne dame Prudence, ful debonairly and with greet pacience, hadde herd al that hir housbonde liked for to seye, thanne axed she of hym licence for to speke, and seyde in this wise: [2255] 'My lord,' quod she, 'as to youre firste resoun, certes it may lightly been answered; for I seye that it is no folie to chaunge conseil whan the thyng is chaunged, or elles whan the thyng semeth ootherweyes than it was biforn; and mooreover, I seye that though ye han sworn and bihight to perfourne youre emprise, and natheles ye weyve to perfourne thilke same emprise by juste cause, men sholde nat seyn therfore that

ye were a lier ne forsworn, for the book seith that the wise man maketh no lesyng whan he turneth his corage to the better, and al be it so that youre emprise be established and ordeyned by greet multitude of folk, yet thar ye nat accomplice thilke ordinaunce but yow like; for the trouthe of thynges and the profit been rather founden in fewe folk that been wise and ful of resoun, than by greet multitude of folk ther every man crieth and clatereth what that hym liketh; soothly, swich multitude is nat honeste.

[2260] 'As to the seconde resoun, whereas ye seyn that alle wommen been wikke; save youre grace, certes ye despisen alle wommen in this wyse, and "he that al despiseth al displeseth," as seith the book; and Senec seith, that who so wole have sapience shal no man despise, but he shal gladly techen the science that he kan withouten presumcioun or pride, and swiche thynges as he nought ne kan he shal nat been ashamed to lerne hem and enquire of lasse folk than hymself; and, sire, that ther hath been many a good womman may lightly be preved, for certes, sire, oure Lord Jhesu Crist wolde never have descended to be born of a womman, if alle wommen hadden ben wikke; [2265] and after that, for the grete bountee that is in wommen, oure Lord Jhesu Crist, whan he was risen fro deeth to lyve, appeered rather to a womman than to his Apostles; and though that Salomon seith that he ne foond never womman good, it folweth nat therfore that alle womman ben wikke, for though that he ne foond no good womman, certes, ful many another man hath founden many a womman ful good and trewe; or elles, per aventure, the entente of Salomon was this, that, as in sovereyn bounte, he foond no womman;

2255. *the book seith*: Chaucer's translation of the 'Scriptum est' or 'il est escript' with which the Latin and French texts introduce an unassigned quotation.

2260. *Senec seith*: in the supposititious *De Quat. Virtutibus*, cap. iii.

2260. *despise*, H^o *despraysse*.

2250. *For it is written . . . thy counsel*, om. EH³, supplied from Camb. MS. in accordance with Latin and French. The quotations are from Seneca, *Controu.* ii. 13. 12, and Publilius Syrus, *Sent.* 324.

that is to seyn that ther is no wight that hath sovereyn bountee, save God allone,—as he hymself recordeth in hys evaungelie,—[2270] for ther nys no creature so good that hym ne wanteth somewhat of the perfeccioun of God, that is his maker.

‘Youre thridde resoun is this,—ye seyn if ye governe yow by my conseil it sholde seme that ye hadde yewe me the maistrie and the lordshipe over youre persone. Sire, save youre grace, it is nat so, for if it were so that no man sholde be conseilled but only of hem that hadden lordshipe and maistrie of his persone, men wolden nat be conseilled so ofte, for soothly thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos, yet hath he free choys wheither he wole werke by that conseil or noon.

‘And as to youre fourthe resoun; ther ye seyn that the janglerie of wommen hath hyd thynges that they wiste noght, as who seith that a womman kan nat hyde that she woot, [2275] sire, thise wordes been understonde of wommen that been jangleresses and wikked, of whiche wommen men seyn that thre thynges dryven a man out of his hous,—that is to seyn, smoke, droppying of reyn, and wikked wyves; and of swiche wommen seith Salomon, that it were better dwelle in desert than with a womman that is riotous, and, sire, by youre leve, that am nat I; for ye han ful ofte assayed my grete silence and my gret pacience, and eek how wel that I kan hyde and hele thynges that men oghte secreely to hyde.

[2280] ‘And soothly, as to youre fifte resoun, where as ye seyn that in wikked conseil wommen venquisshe men, God woot thilke resoun stant heere in no stede; for, understonde now, ye asken conseil to do wikkednesse, and if ye wole werken wikkednesse, and youre wif restreyneth thilke wikked purpos and overcometh yow by resoun and by good conseil, certes youre wyf oghte rather to be preised than y-blamed. Thus sholde ye understonde the philosophre that seith, “In wikked

conseil wommen venquisschen hir housbondes.”

[2285] ‘And ther as ye blamen alle wommen and hir resouns, I shal shewe yow by manye ensamples, that many a womman hath ben ful good, and yet been, and hir conseils ful hoolsome and profitable. Eek som men han seyde that the conseillynge of wommen is outhur to decre, or elles to litel of pris; but, al be it so that ful many a womman is badde and hir conseil vile and noght worth, yet han men founde ful many a good womman, and ful discrete and wise in conseillynge.

‘Loo, Jacob, by good conseil of his mooder Rebekka, wan the benysoun of Yssak his fader, and the lordshipe over alle his bretheren: Judith, by hire good conseil, delivered the citee of Bethulie, in which she dwelled, out of the handes of Olofurnus, that hadde it biseged and wolde have al destroyed it: [2290] Abygail delivered Nabal hir housbonde fro David the kyng that wolde have slayn hym, and apayed the ire of the kyng by hir wit and by hir good conseillyng: Hester enhaunced greetly by hir good conseil the peple of God in the regne of Assucus the kyng: and the same bountee in good conseillyng of many a good womman may men telle, and moore over, whan oure Lord hadde creat Adam oure forme fader, he seyde in this wise: “It is nat good to been a man alloone; make we to hym an helpe semblable to hym self.”

[2295] ‘Heere may ye se that if that wommen were nat goode and hir conseils goode and profitable, oure Lord God of hevene wolde never han wrought hem, ne called hem “help” of man, but rather confusioun of man. And ther seyde oones a clerk in two vers, “What is better than Gold? Jaspre. What is better than Jaspre? Wisdom. And what is better than Wisdom? Wom-

2285. *ensamples*, H *resons* and *ensamples*.

2285. *benysoun*, H *blessyng*.

2295. *in two vers*:

‘Quid melius auro? Jaspis. Quid Jaspide? Sensus. Quid sensu? Muller. Quid Muliere? Nihil.’

man. And what is bettre than a good Womman? No thyng." And, sire, by manye of othre resouns may ye seen that manye wommen been goode, and hir conseilis goode and profitable, [2300] and therefore, sire, if ye wol triste to my conseil, I shal restooore yow youre doghter hool and sound, and eek I wol do to yow so muche that ye shul have honour in this cause.'

Whan Melibee hadde herd the wordes of his wyf Prudence, he seyde thus: 'I see wel that the word of Salomon is sooth. He seith that wordes that been spoken discreetly, by ordinaunce, been honycombes, for they yeven swetnesse to the soule and hoolsomnesse to the body; and, wyf, by-cause of thy sweete wordes, and eek for I have assayed and preved thy grete sapience and thy grete trouthe, I wol governe me by thy conseil in alle thyng.'

[2305] 'Now, sire,' quod dame Prudence, 'and syn ye vouchesauf to been governed by my conseil, I wol enforme yow how ye shul governe youreself in chesyng of youre conseilours. Ye shul first in alle youre werkes mekely biseken to the heighe God that he wol be youre conseilour, and shapeth yow to swich entente that he yewe yow conseil and confort, as taughte Thobie his sone: "At alle tymes thou shalt blesse God and praye hym to dresse thy weyes, and looke that alle thy conseilis been in hym for everemoore." Seint Jame eek seith, "If any of yow have nede of sapience, axe it of God." [2310] And afterward, thanne shul ye taken conseil of youre self and examyne wel youre thoghtes of swich thyng as yow thynketh that is best for youre profit, and thanne shul ye dryve fro youre herte thre thynges that been contrarie to good conseil,—that is to seyn, ire, covetise, and hastifnesse.

'First, he that axeth conseil of hymself, certes he moste been withouten ire, for manye causes. The firste is this: he that hath greet ire and wratthe in hymself, he weneth alwey that he may do thyng that he may nat do. [2315] And

secoundely, he that is irous and wrooth, he ne may nat wel deme, and he that may nat wel deme, may nat wel conseil. The thridde is this, that he that is irous and wrooth, as seith Senec, ne may nat speke but blameful thynges, and with his viciouse wordes he stireth oother folk to angre and to ire. And eek, sire, ye moste dryve covetise out of youre herte, [2320] for the Apostle seith that covetise is roote of alle harmes; and trust wel that a covetous man ne kan noght deme, ne thynke, but oonly to fulfille the ende of his covetise, and certes, that ne may never been accompliced, for ever the moore habundaunce that he hath of riches the moore he desireth. And, sire, ye moste also dryve out of youre herte hastifnesse, for certes, ye ne may nat deeme for the beste a sodeyn thought that falleth in youre herte, but ye moste avyse yow on it ful ofte, [2325] for as ye herde bifore, the commune proverbe is this, that "he that soone deemeth, soone repenteth." Sire, ye ne be nat alwey in lyke disposicion, for certes som thyng that somtyme semeth to yow that it is good for to do, another tyme it semeth to yow the contrarie.

'Whan ye han taken conseil of youre self and han deemed by good deliberacion swich thyng as you semeth best, thanne rede I yow that ye kepe it secree. [2330] Biwrey nat youre conseil to no persone, but if so be that ye wenen sikerly that thurgh youre biwreyng youre condicion shal be to yow the moore profitable; for Jhesus Syrak seith, "Neither to thy foo, ne to thy frend, discovere nat thy secree, ne thy folie, for they wol yewe yow audience and lookyng and supportacioun in thy presence, and scorne thee in thy absence." Another clerk seith, that scarsly shaltou fynden any persone that may kepe conseil sikerly.

2315. *as seith Senec*, rather Publil. Syrus, Sent. 281.

2315. *but blameful*, E *but he blame*.

2325. *as you seme'th*, E *as you list*.

2330. *Another clerk*: pseudo-Seneca, *De Moribus*, Sent. 16.

'The book seith, "Whil that thou kepest thy conseil in thyn herte, thou kepest it in thy prisoun, [2335] and whan thou biwreyest thy conseil to any wight he holdeth thee in his snare"; and therefore yow is better to hyde youre conseil in youre herte than praye him to whom ye han biwreyed youre conseil that he wole kepen it cloos and stille; for Seneca seith, "If so be that thou ne mayst nat thyn owene conseil hyde, how darstou prayen any oother wight thy conseil sikerly to kepe?"

'But nathelees, if thou were sikerly that the biwreying of thy conseil to a persone wol make thy condicioun to stonden in the better plyt, thanne shaltou tellen hym thy conseil in this wise: first, thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were levere pees or werre, or this or that, ne shewe hym nat thy wille and thyn entente,—[2340] for trust wel, that comunly thise conseilours been flatereres, namely the conseilours of grete lordes, for they enforcen hem alwey rather to speken plesante wordes, enclynynge to the lordes lust, than wordes that been trewe or profitable; and therefore men seyn, that the riche man hath seeld good conseil, but if he have it of hym self.

'And after that thou shalt considere thy freendes and thyne enemys; [2345] and as touchynge thy freendes thou shalt considere whiche of hem been moost faithful and moost wise, and oldest, and most approved in conseillyng, and of hem shalt thou aske thy conseil as the caas requirith.

'I seye that first ye shul clepe to youre conseil youre freendes that been trewe, for Salomon seith that "Right as the herte of a man deliteth in savour that is soote, right so the conseil of trewe freendes yeveth swetenesse to the soule"; he seith also, "Ther may no thyng be likned to the trewe freend, [2350] for certes

gold ne silver beth nat so muche worth as the goode wyl of a trewe freend"; and eek, he seith that "A trewe freend is a strong deffense; whoso that it fyndeth, certes, he fyndeth a greet tresour."

'Thanne shul ye eek considere if that youre trewe freendes been discrete and wise, for the book seith, "Axe alwey thy conseil of hem that been wise"; and by this same resoun shul ye clepen to youre conseil of youre freendes that been of age, swiche as han seyn and been expert in manye thynges, and been approved in conseillynges; for the book seith that in the olde men is the sapience, and in longe tyme the prudence; [2355] and Tullius seith, that grete thynges ne been nat ay accompliced by strengthe, ne by delivernesse of body, but by good conseil, by auctoritee of persones, and by science; the whiche thre thynges ne been nat fieble by age, but certes they enforcen and encreescen day by day. And thanne shul ye kepe this for a general reule; first, shul ye clepen to youre conseil a fewe of youre freendes that been especiale; for Salomon seith, "Manye freendes have thou, but among a thousand, chese thee oon to be thy conseilour," for, al be it so that thou first ne telle thy conseil but to a fewe, thou mayst afterward telle it to mo folk if it be nede. But looke alwey that thy conseilours have thilke thre condiciouns that I have seyde bifore, that is to seyn, that they be trewe, wise, and of oold experience. [2360] And werke nat alwey in every nede by oon counseillour allone, for somtyme bihooveth it to been counselled by manye, for Salomon seith, "Salvacoun of thynges is where as ther been manye conseilours."

'Now, sith I have toold yow of which folk ye sholde been counselled, now wol I teche yow which conseil ye oghte to eschewe. First, ye shul eschue the conseillyng of fooles, for Salomon seith, "Taak no conseil of a fool, for he ne kan noght conseilte but after his owene lust

2330. *The book seith*: Petrus Alfonsi, *Discip. Cler.* iv. 3.

2335. *Seneca seith*: pseudo-Seneca, *De Moribus*, Sent. 16.

2355. *Tullius*: Cicero, *De Senect.* vi. 17.

and his affeccioun." The book seith that the propretee of a fool is this, "He troweth lightly harm of every wight, and lightly troweth alle bountee in hym self." [2365] Thou shalt eek eschue the conseillyng of flatereres, swiche as enforcen hem rather to preise youre persone by flaterie, than for to telle yow the soothfastnesse of thynges.

'Wherefore Tullius seith, "Amonges alle the pestilences that been in frendshipe the gretteste is flaterie"; and therefore is it moore nede that thou eschue and drede flatereres than any oother peple. The book seith, "Thou shalt rather drede and flee fro the sweete wordes of flateringe preiseres than fro the egre wordes of thy freend that seith thee thy sothes." Salomon seith that "The wordes of a flaterere is a snare to cacche with innocentz." He seith also that "He that speketh to his freend wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce, setteth a net biforn his feet to cacche hym"; [2370] and therefore, seith Tullius, "Enclyne nat thyn eres to flatereres, ne taaketh no conseil of the wordes of flaterie"; and Caton seith, "Avyse thee wel, and eschue the wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce."

'And eek thou shalt eschue the conseillyng of thynne olde enemys that been reconciled. The book seith that no wight retourneth sauflly into the grace of his olde enemy; and Isope seith, "Ne trust nat to hem to whiche thou hast had som tyme werre or enemytee, ne telle hem nat thy conseil"; [2375] and Seneca

2360. *The book seith*: Cicero, *Tusc. D.* iii.

30. 37.

2365. *Tullius seith*: *De Amicitia*, xxv. 91.

2365. *The book seith*: pseudo-Seneca, *De Quat. Virt.* cap. iii.: 'Non acerba verba, sed blanda, timebis.'

2370. *Tullius*: *De Offic.* i. 26 91.

2370. *Caton*: Dionysius Cato, *De Morib.* iii. 5.

2370. *The book seith*: Publil. Syrus, Sent. 91.

2370. *Isope seith*. In the Latin text the lines are quoted as:

'Ne confidatis secreta nec hijs detegatis
Cum quibus egistis pugnae discrimina tristis.'

2375. *Seneca*: rather Publil. Syrus, Sent. 389: 'Numquam ubi diu fuit ignis deficit vapor.'

telleth the cause why: "It may nat be," seith he, "that where greet fyr hath longe tyme endured, that ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse"; and therefore seith Salomon, "In thyn olde foo trust never"; for sikerly though thyn enemy be reconciled and maketh thee chiere of humylitee, and lowteth to thee with his heed, ne trust hym never; for certes he maketh thilke feyned humilitee moore for his profit than for any love of thy person, by-cause that he deemeth to have victorie over thy persone by swich feyned contenance, the which victorie he myghte nat wyne by strif or werre. And Peter Alfonse seith, "Make no felawshipe with thynne olde enemys, for if thou do hem bountee they wol perverten it into wikkednesse."

[2380] 'And eek thou most eschue the conseillyng of hem that been thy servantz and beren thee greet reverence, for peraventure they doon it moore for drede than for love. And therefore seith a philosopre in this wise: "Ther is no wight partlyt trewe to hym that he to soore dredeth"; and Tullius seith, "Ther nys no myght so greet of any emperour that longe may endure, but if he have moore love of the peple than drede."

'Thou shalt also eschue the conseiling of folk that been dronkelewe, for they ne kan no conseil hyde; for Salomon seith, "Ther is no privetee ther as regneth dronkenesse." [2385] Ye shul also han in suspect the conseiling of swich folk as conseilte yow a thyng prively and conseilte yow the contrarie openly; for Cassidorie seith that "It is a manere sleighte to hyndre, whan he sheweth to doon a thyng openly and werketh prively the contrarie."

'Thou shalt also have in suspect the conseiling of wikked folk, for the book seith, "The conseiling of wikked folk is alwey ful of fraude"; and David seith,

2375. *Peter Alfonse*: *Disc. Cler.* iv. 4.

2380. *doon*, H⁶ say.

2380. *Tullius seith*: *De Off.* ii. 7. 25.

2385. *Cassidorie*: *Variar. Ep.* Lib. x. Ep. 18.

2385. *have in suspect*, H eschiewe.

"Blisful is that man that hath nat folwed the conseiylng of shrewes." Thou shalt also eschue the conseiylng of yong folk, for hir conseil is nat rype.

[2390] 'Now, sire, sith I have shewed yow of which folk ye shul take youre conseil, and of which folk ye shul folwe the conseil, now wol I teche yow how ye shal examyne youre conseil, after the doctrine of Tullius.

'In the examynynge thanne of youre conseilour ye shul considere manye thynges. Alderfirst thou shalt considere, that in thilke thyng that thou purposest and upon what thyng thou wolt have conseil, that verray trouthe be seyde and conserved; this is to seyn, telle trewely thy tale; for he that seith fals may nat wel be conseyllid in that cas of which he lieth.

[2395] 'And after this thou shalt considere the thynges that acorden to that thou purposest for to do by thy conseilours, if resoun accorde therto, and eek if thy myght may atteine therto; and if the moore part and the bettre part of thy conseilours accorde therto or noon. Thanne shaltou considere what thyng shal folwe after hir conseiylng, as hate, pees, werre, grace, profit, or damage, and manye othere thynges. Thanne, of alle thise thynges, thou shalt chese the beste, and weye alle othere thynges. Thanne shaltow considere of what roote is engendred the matiere of thy conseil, and what fruyt it may conceive and engendre. [2400] Thou shalt eek considere alle thise causes fro whennes they been sprongen.

'And when ye han examyned youre conseil as I have seyde, and which partie is the bettre and moore profitable, and hast approved it by manye wise folk, and olde, thanne shaltou considere if thou mayst parfourne it and maken of it a good ende; for certes, resoun wol nat that any man sholde bigynne a thyng, but if he myght parfourne it as hym oghte, ne no

wight sholde take upon hym so hevy a charge that he myght nat bere it; [2405] for the proverbe seith, "He that to muche embraceth, distreyneth litel"; and Catoun seith, "Assay to do swich thyng as thou hast power to doon, lest that the charge oppresse thee so soore that thee bihoveth to weye thyng that thou hast bigonne." And, if so be that thou be in doute wheither thou mayst parfourne a thing or noon, chese rather to suffre than bigynne. And Piers Alphonse seith, "If thou hast myght to doon a thyng of which thou most repente thee, it is bettre 'nay' than 'ye'"; this is to seyn, that thee is bettre holde thy tonge stille than for to speke. [2410] Thanne may ye understonde by strengere reasons that if thou hast power to parfourne a werk of which thou shalt repente, thanne is it bettre that thou suffre than bigynne. Wel seyn they that defenden every wight to assaye any thyng of which he is in doute wheither he may parfourne it or noon. And after, when ye han examyned youre conseil, as I have seyde bifore, and knowen wel that ye may parfourne youre emprise, conferme it thanne sadly til it be at an ende.

'Now is it resoun and tyme that I shewe yow whanne and wherfore that ye may chaunge youre conseil withouten youre repreve. Soothly a man may chaungen his purpos and his conseil if the cause cesseth, or when a newe caas bitydeth; [2415] for the lawe seith that upon thynges that newly bityden bihoveth newe conseil; and Senec seith, "If thy conseil is comen to the ceris of thyn enemy, chaunge thy conseil." Thou mayst also chaunge thy conseil if so be that thou mayst fynde that by error, or by oother

2405. *the proverbe* 'qui nimis capit, parum stringit.'

2405. *Catoun, De Mor.* iii. 15:

'Quod potes id tempta, operis ne pondere pressus Succumbat labor, et frustra temptata relinquant.'

2405. *Piers Alphonse, Disc. Cler.* vi. 12. The Latin 'si dicere metuas unde poeniteas semper est melius non quam sic' is much clearer than the English.

2410. *conseil, E⁸ conseilours.*

2415. *oother cause, H oother processe.*

2395. *conceive, E conserve.*

2400. *as hym oghte, H and make therof a good ende.*

cause, harm or damage may bityde. Also if thy conseil be dishonest, or ellis cometh of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy conseil, for the lawes seyn that alle bihestes that been dishoneste been of no value, [2420] and eek if so be that it be impossible or may nat goodly be parfourned or kept.

'And take this for a general reule, that every conseil that is affirmed so strongly that it may nat be chaunged for no condicioun that may bityde, I seye that thilke conseil is wikked.'

This Melibeus, whanne he hadde herd the doctrine of his wyf, dame Prudence, answerde in this wyse: 'Dame,' quod he, 'as yet into this tyme ye han wel and covenantly taught me as in general how I shal governe me in the chesynge and in the witholdinge of my conseilours, but now wolde I fayn that ye wolde condescende in especial, [2425] and telle me how liketh yow, or what semeth yow by oure conseilours that we han chosen in oure present nede.'

'My lord,' quod she, 'I biseke yow in al humblesse that ye wol nat wilfully replie agayn my resouns, ne distempre youre herte, thogh I speke thyng that yow displese; for God woot that as in myn entente I speke it for youre beste, for youre honour, and for youre profite eke; and soothly I hope that youre benygnytee wol taken it in pacience. Trusteth me wel,' quod she, 'that youre conseil as in this caas ne sholde nat, as to speke properly, be called a conseillyng, but a mocion or a moevyng of folye, [2430] in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry wise.

'First and forward ye han erred in thassemblynge of youre conseilours; for ye sholde first have cleped a fewe folk to youre conseil, and after ye myghte han shewed it to mo folk, if it hadde been nede; but certes, ye han sodeynly cleped to youre conseil a greet multitude of peple ful chargeant and ful anoyous for to heere. Also, ye han erred, for there

as ye sholden oonly have cleped to youre conseil youre trewe frendes olde and wise, [2435] ye han y-cleped straunge folk, and yong folk, false flatereres and enemys reconciled, and folk that doon yow reverence withouten love. And eek also ye have erred for ye han brought with yow to youre conseil ire, coveitise, and hastifnesse; the whiche thre thinges been contrariouse to every conseil honeste and profitable, the whiche thre ye han nat anientissed or destroyed hem, neither in youre self ne in youre conseilours, as yow oghte. Ye han erred also, for ye han shewed to youre conseilours youre talent and youre affeccion to make werre anon, and for to do vengeance. [2440] They han espied by youre wordes to what thyng ye been enclyned, and therefore han they rather consailed yow to youre talent than to youre profit.

'Ye han erred also, for it semeth that it suffiseth to han been consailed by thise conseilours oonly, and with litel avys, where-as in so greet and so heigh a nede it hadde been necessarie mo conseilours and moore deliberacioun to parfourne youre emprise.

'Ye han erred also, for ye han nat examyned youre conseil in the forseyde manere, ne in due manere as the caas requireth. [2445] Ye han erred also, for ye han nat maked no divisioun bitwixe youre conseilours, this is to seyn, bitwixen youre trewe freendes and youre feyned conseilours; ne ye han nat knowe the wil of youre trewe freendes, olde and wise; but ye han cast alle hire wordes in an hochebot, and enclyned youre herte to the moore partie and to the gretter nombre, and there been ye condescended. And, sith ye woot wel that men shal alwey fynde a gretter nombre of fooles than of wise men, and therefore the counsils that been at congregaciouns and multitudes of folk, there as men take moore reward to the nombre than to the sapience of persones, [2450] ye se wel that in swiche conseillynges fooles han the maistrie.'

2415. *Also if, etc.*, H *Also thou change thy conseil if that it be dishoneste.*

2430. *thassemblynge*, H *the gaderyng.*

Melibeus answerde agayn, and seyde, 'I graunte wel that I have erred, but there as thou hast toold me heerbiforn that he nys nat to blame that chaungeth his conseilours in certein caas, and for certeine juste causes, I am al redy to chaunge my conseilours right as thou wolt devyse. The proverbe seith, that for to do synne is mannyssh, but certes, for to persevere longe in synne is werk of the devel.'

[2455] To this sentence answereth anon dame Prudence and seyde, 'Examineth,' quod she, 'yours conseil and lat us see the whiche of hem han spoken most resonably, and taught yow best conseil; and for as muche as that the examynacioun is necessarie, lat us bigynne at the surgiens and at the phisiciens that first speeken in this matiere. I sey yow that the surgiens and phisiciens han seyde yow in youre conseil discreetly as hem oughte, and in hir speche seyde ful wisely that to the office of hem apertneth, to doon to every wight honour and profit, and no wight for to anye, [2460] and in hir craft to doon greet diligence unto the cure of hem whiche that they han in hir governance. And, sire, right as they han answered wisely and discreetly, right so rede I that they been heighly and sovereynly gerdoned for hir noble speche, and eek, for they sholde do the moore ententif bisynesse in the curacioun of youre doghter deere; for, al be it so that they been youre freendes, therefore shal ye nat suffren that they serve yow for noght, [2465] but ye oghte the rather gerdone hem and shewe hem youre largesse.

'And as touchynge the proposicioun which that the phisiciens encreesceden in this caas; this is to seyn, that in maladies that oon contrarie is warissed by another contrarie; I wolde fayn knowe how ye

2450. *The proverbe seith*, S. Chrysost. *Adhortatio ad Theod. lapsu*, i. 14: 'Humanum enim est peccare, diabolicum vero perseverare.'

2455. *apertneth*, H² *appendith*.

2465. *encreesceden*, enlarged on; H *han shewed you*.

2465. *how ye understonde this text*, H *thilke text and how thay understonde it*.

understonde this text, and what is youre sentence.'

'Certes,' quod Melibeus, 'I understonde it in this wise: [2470] that right as they han doon me a contrarie, right so sholde I doon hem another; for right as they han venged hem on me and doon me wrong, right so shal I venge me upon hem, and doon hem wrong, and thanne have I cured oon contrarie by another.'

'Lo, lo,' quod dame Prudence, 'how lightly is every man enclined to his owene desir and to his owene plesaunce! Certes,' quod she, 'the wordes of the phisiciens ne sholde nat han been understonden in this wise, [2475] for certes, wikkednesse is nat contrarie to wikkednesse, ne vengeance to vengeance, ne wrong to wrong, but they been semblable; and therefore, o vengeance is nat warissed by another vengeance, ne o wroong by another wroong, but everich of hem encreesceth and aggreggeth oother.

'But certes, the wordes of the phisiciens sholde been understonden in this wise; for good and wikkednesse been two contraries, and pees and werre, vengeance and suffraunce, discord and accord, and manye othere thynges; [2480] but certes, wikkednesse shal be warissed by goodnesse, discord by accord, werre by pees, and so forth of othere thynges; and heer-to accordeth Seint Paul the Apostle in manye places.

'He seith, "Ne yeldeth nat harm for harm, ne wikked speche for wikked speche; but do wel to hym that dooth thee harm, and blesse hym that seith to thee harm." And in manye othere places he amonesteth pees and accord.

[2485] 'But now wol I speke to yow of the conseil which that was yeven to yow by the men of lawe, and the wise folk, that seyden alle by oon accord, as ye han herd bifore, that over alle thynges ye sholde doon youre diligence to kepen youre persone and to warnestoore youre hous; and seyden also, that in this caas yow oghten for to werken ful avysely

2465. *sentence*, H *entente*.

and with greet deliberacioun. And, sire, as to the firste point that toucheth to the keepyng of youre persone, [2490] ye shul understonde that he that hath werre shal evermoore mekely and devoutly preyen, bifore alle thynges, that Jhesus Crist of his grete mercy wol han hym in his proteccioun and been his sovereyn helpyng at his nede; for certes, in this world ther is no wight that may be conseilLED ne kept sufficently withouten the keepyng of oure Lord Jhesu Crist.

‘To this sentence accordeth the prophete David, that seith, “If God ne kepe the citee, in ydel waketh he that it kepeth.” [2495] Now, sire, thanne shul ye committe the keepyng of youre persone to youre trewe freendes that been approved and knowe, and of hem shul ye axen helpe, youre persone for to kepe, for Catoun seith, “If thou hast nede of help, axe it of thy freendes, for ther nys noon so good a phisicien as thy trewe freend.”

‘And after this, thanne shul ye kepe yow fro alle straunge folk, and fro lyeres, and have alway in suspect hire compaignye, for Piers Alfonse seith, “Ne taak no compaignye by the weye of straunge men, but if so be that thou have knowe hym of a lenger tyme. [2500] And if so be, that he be falle into thy compaignye, paraventure, withouten thyn assent, enquire thanne, as subtilly as thou mayst, of his conversacioun, and of his lyf bifore, and feyne thy wey,—seye that thou goost thider as thou wolt nat go,—and if he bereth a spere, hoold thee on the right syde, and if he bere a swerd, hoold thee on his left syde.” And after this thanne shul ye kepe yow wisely from all swich manere peple as I have seyde bifore, and hem and hir conseil eschewe.

‘And after this, thanne shul ye kepe yow in swich manere [2505] that for any presumpcioun of youre strengthe, that ye ne dispise nat ne acounte nat the myght

of youre adversarie so litel that ye lete the keepyng of youre persone for youre presumpcioun; for every wys man dredeth his enemy, and Salomon seith, “Weleful is he that of alle hath drede, for certes, he that thurgh the hardynesse of his herte and thurgh the hardynesse of hymself hath to greet presumpcioun, hym shal yvel bityde.” Thanne shul ye evermoore countrewayte embusshementz and alle espaille. [2510] For Senec seith, that the wise man that dredeth harmes escheweth harmes, ne he ne falleth into perils that perils escheweth. And, al be it so that it seme that thou art in siker place, yet shaltow alwey do thy diligence in keepyng of thy persone; this is to seyn, ne be nat negligent to kepe thy persone, nat oonly fro thy gretteste enemys, but fro thy leeste enemy. Senec seith, “A man that is wel avysed, he dredeth his leste enemye.” [2515] Ovyde seith that the litel wesele wol slee the grete bole and the wilde hert. And the book seith, “A litel thorn may prikke a greet kyng ful soore, and an hound wol holde the wilde boor.”

‘But natheles, I sey nat thou shalt be coward, that thou doute ther wher as is no drede. The book seith that somme folk han greet lust to deceyve, but yet they dreden hem to be deceyved. Yet shaltow drede to been empoisoned, and kepe yow from the compaignye of scorneres, [2520] for the book seith, “With scorneres make no compaignye, but flec hire wordes as venym.”

‘Now as to the seconde point; where as youre wise conseilours counselled yow to warnestore youre hous with gret dili-gence, I wolde fayn knowe how that ye understonde thilke wordes, and what is youre sentence.’

Melibeus answerde and seyde, ‘Certes, I understande it in this wise: That I

2495. *Catoun, De Moribus*, iv. 13:

‘Auxillum a notis petito, si forte laboras.

Ne quisquam melior medicus quam fidus amicus.’

2495. *Piers Alfonse, Disc. Cler.* xviii. 10.

2510. *Senec seith*, Publilius Syrus, Sent. 547.

2510. *that dredeth, E he dredeth.*

2510. *Senec seith*, Publilius Syrus, Sentent.

255: om. E.

2515. *Ovyde, De Rem. Am.* ii. 25, 26.

2520. *conscilled, H warnede.*

shal warnestooore myn hous with toures, swiche as han castelles, and othere manere edifices, and armure and artelries, by whiche thynges I may my persone and myn hous so kepen and deffenden, that myne enemys shul been in drede myn hous for to approche.'

[2525] To this sentence answerde anon Prudence. 'Warnestoorng,' quod she, 'of heighe toures and of grete edifices appertyneth somtyme to pryde and eek men make heihe toures with grete costages and with greet travaille, and whan that they been accompliced yet be they nat worth a stree, but if they be defended by trewe freendes that been olde and wise. And understood wel that the gretteste and strongeste garnyson that a riche man may have, as wel to kepen his persone as his goodes, is that he be biloved amonges hys subgetz and with his neighbores; for thus seith Tullius, that ther is a manere garnysoun that no man may venquysse ne disconfite, and that is [2530] a lord to be biloved of his citezeins and of his peple.

'Now, sire, as to the thridde point, where as youre olde and wise conseilours seyden that yow ne oghte nat sodeynly ne hastily proceden in this nede, but that yow oghte purveyen and apparailen yow in this caas with greet diligence and greet deliberacioun, trewely, I trow that they seyden right wisely and right sooth, for Tullius seith, "In every nede er thou bigynne it, apparaille thee with greet diligence." [2535] Thanne scye I that in vengeance takng, in werre, in bataille, and in warnestoorng, er thou bigynne, I rede that thou apparaille thee therto and do it with greet deliberacioun, for Tullius seith, "The longe apparailng biforn the bataille maketh short victorie,"

2520. *kepen*, H *kepen* and *edificen*.

2525. *appertyneth* . . . *toures*, text from Corpus; EH⁵ om.

2525. *and strongeste*, H *strength* or.

2525. *Tullius*, rather Seneca, *De Clementia*, i. 19. 5: 'Unum est inexpugnabile munimentum, amor civium.'

2530. *Tullius*, *De Offic.* i. 21. 73.

and Cassidorus seith, "The garnyson is stronger than it is longe tyme avysed."

'But now lat us spoken of the conseil that was accorded by youre neighbores, swiche as doon yow reverence withouten love, [2540] youre olde enemys reconciled, youre flatereres, that conseilled yow certeyne thynges prively, and openly conseilleden yow the contrarie, the yonge folk also, that conseilleden yow to venge yow, and make werre anon. And certes, sire, as I have seyde biforn, ye han greetly erred to han cleped swich manere folk to youre conseil, which conseilours been ynogh reprieved by the resouns aforesayd.

[2545] 'But nathelces, lat us now descende to the special. Ye shuln first procede after the doctrine of Tullius. Certes, the trouthe of this matiere, or of this conseil, nedeth nat diligently enquire, for it is wel wist whiche they been that han doon to yow this trespas and vileynye, and how manye trespassours and in what manere they han to yow doon all this wrong and all this vileynye. And after this thanne shul ye examyne the seconde condicioun which that the same Tullius addeth in this matiere; [2550] for Tullius put a thyng which that he clepeth consentynge, this is to seyn, who been they, and how manye and whiche been they, that consenten to thy conseil, in thy wilfulnesse to doon hastif vengeance. And lat us considere also who been they, and how manye been they, and whiche been they, that consenteden to youre adversaries. And certes, as to the firste poynt, it is wel known whiche folk been they that consenteden to youre hastif wilfulnesse; for trewely, alle tho that conseilleden yow to maken sodeyn werre ne been nat youre freendes.

[2555] 'Lat us now considere whiche been they that ye holde so greetly youre freendes as to youre persone; for al be it so that ye be myghty and riche, certes, ye ne been nat but allone; for certes, ye ne han no child but a doghter, ne ye ne

2535. *Cassidorus*, *Variarum*. Lib. i. Ep. 17.

2545. *Tullius*, cp. *De Offic.* ii. 5. 18.

han bretheren, ne cosyns germayns, ne noon oother neigh kynrede, wherfore that youre enemyss for drede sholde stinte to plede with yow, or to destroye youre persone. [2566] Ye knowen also that youre richesses mooten been dispended in diverse parties, and whan that every wight hath his part, they ne wollen taken but litel reward to venge thy deeth; but thyne enemyss been thre, and they han manie children, bretheren, cosyns, and oother ny kynrede, and though so were that thou haddest slayn of hem two or thre, yet dwellen ther ynowe to wrenken hir deeth, and to sle thy persone. And though so be that youre kynrede be moore siker and stedefast than the kyn of youre adversarie, [2565] yet nathelees, youre kynrede nys but a fer kynrede, they been but litel syb to yow, and the kyn of youre enemyss been ny syb to hem, and certes, as in that, hir condicioun is bet than youre.

‘Thanne lat us considere also of the conseillyng of hem that conseilleden yow to taken sodeyn vengeance, whiche it accorde to resoun. And certes, ye knowe wel, nay; for as by right and resoun, ther may no man taken vengeance on no wight but the jure that hath the jurisdiction of it, [2570] whan it is graunted hym to take thilke vengeance hastily or attemprely as the lawe requireth. And yet mooreover of thilke word that Tullius clepeth “consentyng,” thou shalt considere if thy myght and thy power may consenten and suffise to thy wilfulness, and to thy conseilours. And certes, thou mayst wel seyn that nay; for sikerly, as for to speke proprely, we may do no thyng, but only swich thyng as we may doon rightfully, [2575] and certes, rightfully ne mowe ye take no vengeance, as of youre propre auctoritee.

‘Thanne mowe ye seen that youre power ne consenteth nat, ne accordeth nat, with youre wilfulness.

‘Lat us now examyne the thridde point, that Tullius clepeth “consequent.”

2560. *dispended*, H *departed*, Pet. *dalt*.

Thou shalt understonde that the vengeance that thou purposest for to take is the consequent, and therof folweth another vengeance, peril and werre, and othere damages with-out nombre, of whiche we be nat war, as at this tyme. [2580] And as touchyng the fourthe point, that Tullius clepeth “engendryng,” thou shalt considere that this wrong which that is doon to thee is engendred of the hate of thyne enemyss, and of the vengeance takyng upon that wolde engendre another vengeance, and muchel sorwe and wastyng of richesses, as I seyde.

‘Now, sire, as to the point that Tullius clepeth “causes,” which that is the laste point. Thou shalt understonde that the wrong that thou hast receyved hath certene causes, [2585] whiche that clerkes clepen *Oriens* and *Efficiens*, and *Causa longinqua* and *Causa propinqua*, this is to seyn, the fer cause and the ny cause. The fer cause is Almyghty God, that is cause of alle thynges; the neer cause is thy thre enemyss. The cause accidental was hate, the cause material been the fyve woundes of thy doghter. [2590] The cause formal is the manere of hir werkynge that broghten laddres and cloumben in at thy wyndowes; the cause final was for to sle thy doghter. It letted nat in as muche as in hem was.

‘But for to spoken of the fer cause, as to what ende they shul come, or what shal finally bityde of hem in this caas, ne kan I nat deme but by conjectyng and by supposyng. For we shul suppose that they shul come to a wikked ende by-cause that the book of decrees seith, “Seelden, or with greet payne, been causes broght to good ende whanne they been baddely bigonne.”

[2595] ‘Now, sire, if men wolde axe me why that God suffred men to do yow this vileynye, certes, I kan nat wel answer, as for no soothfastnesse. For thapostle seith that the sciences and the

2590. *the book of decrees: Decret. Gratiani*, P. ii. Causa i. Qu. i. C. 25.

2595. *this vileynye*, H² *this wrong and vilenye*.

juggementz of oure Lord God Almyghty been ful depe,—ther may no man comprehende ne serchen hem suffisantly. Nathelees, by certeyne presumpciouns and coniectynges, I holde and bileeve, that God, which that is ful of justice and of rightwisnesse, hath suffred this bityde by juste cause, resonable.

[2600] 'Thy name is Melibee, this is to seyn, "a man that drynketh hony." Thou hast y-dronke so muchel hony of sweete temporeel richesses, and delices and honours of this world, that thou art dronken, and hast forgeten Jhesu Crist, thy creatour; thou ne hast nat doon to hym swich honour and reverence as thee oughte, ne thou ne hast nat wel ytaken kepe to the wordes of Ovide, that seith, [2605] "Under the hony of the goodes of the body is hyd the venym that sleeth the soule"; and Salomon seith, "If thou hast founden hony, etc of it that suffiseth, for if thou ete of it out of mesure, thou shalt spewe, and be nedey and poure"; and peraventure, Crist hath thee in despit, and hath turned away from thee his face and his eeris of misericorde, and also he hath suffied that thou hast been punysshed in the manere that thou hast y-trespased.' [2610] Thou hast doon synne agayn oure Lord Crist, for certes, the thre enemyes of mankynde,—that is to seyn, the flessch, the feend and the world,—thou hast suffred hem entre into thyn herte wilfully by the wyndowes of thy body, and hast nat defended thy self suffisantly agayns hire assautes, and hire temptaciouns, so that they han wounded thy soule in five places; this is to seyn, the deedly synnes that been entred into thyn herte by thy five wittes. [2615] And in the same manere oure Lord Crist hath wold and suffred that thy thre enemyes been entred into thyn hous by the wyndowes, and han y-wounded thy doghter in the foreseyde manere.'

'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I se wel that ye enforce yow muchel by wordes to overcome me in swich manere that I

shal nat venge me of myne enemyes, shewyng me the perils and the yveles that myghten falle of this vengeance; but whoso wolde considere in alle vengeancees the perils and yveles that myghte sewe of vengeance takynge, [2620] a man wolde never take vengeance; and that were harm, for by the vengeance takynge been the wikked men disseyvered fro the goode men, and they that han wyl to do wikkednesse restreynen hir wikked purpos whan they seen the punyssynge and chastisyng of the trespassours.'

[And to this answered dame Prudence, 'Certes,' said she, 'I grant you that from vengeance come many evils and many benefits, and yet vengeance belongeth not to everyone but only to the judges, and to those who have jurisdiction over evil-doers.]

[2625] 'And yet seye I moore, that right as a singular persone synneth in takynge vengeance of another man, right so synneth the juge if he do no vengeance of hem that it han disserved; for Senec seith thus: That maister, he seith, is good that proveth shrewes. And, as Cassidore seith, "A man dredeth to do outrages whan he woot and knoweth that it displeth to the juges and sovereyns." Another seith, "The juge that dredeth to do right maketh men shrewes," [2630] and Seint Paule the Apostle seith in his Epistle, whan he writeth unto the Romainys, that "The juges beren nat the spere withouten cause, but they beren it to punyssen the shrewes and mysdoers, and to defende the goode men." If ye wol thanne take vengeance of youre enemyes, ye shul retourne, or have youre recours to the juge that hath the jurisdiction upon hem, and he shal punyssen hem as the lawe axeth and requireth.'

2615. *sewe*, H *folwe*.

2620. *disseyvered*, H *destruyed and disseyvered*.

2620. *to do wikkednesse*, H om. *do*.

2620. *And to this answered*, etc. The words in brackets are inserted from the French; they are not given in any of the seven MSS.

2625. *Cassidore*, *Variar*. i. 4.

2625. *Another seith*, Publil. Syrus, Sentent. 538.

2600. *Ovide*, *Amor*. i. viii. 104.

'A!' quod Melibee, 'this vengeance liketh me no thyng. [2635] I bihtenke me now, and take heede how Fortune hath norissed me fro my childhede, and hath holpen me to passe many a stroong paas. Now wol I assayen hire, trowynge with Goddes helpe that she shal helpe me my shame for to venge.'

'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'if ye wol werke by my conseil ye shul nat asseye Fortune by no wey, ne ye shul nat lene or bowe unto hire after the word of Senec, for thynges that been folily doon and that been in hope of Fortune shullen never come to goode ende. [2640] And, as the same Senec seith, "The moore cleer and the moore shynynge that Fortune is, the moore brotil and the sonner broken she is; trusteth nat in hire, for she nys nat stidefast, ne stable, for whan thou trowest to be moost seur and siker of hire helpe, she wol faille thee and deceyve thee." And where as ye seyn that Fortune hath norissed yow fro youre childhede, I seye, that in so muchel shul ye the lasse truste in hire and in hir wit; [2645] for Senec seith, "What man that is norissed by Fortune she maketh hym a greet fool." Now thanne, syn ye desire and axe vengeance, and the vengeance that is doon after the lawe and before the juge ne liketh yow nat, and the vengeance that is doon in hope of Fortune is perilous and uncertein, thanne have ye noon oother remedie, but for to have youre recours unto the sovereyn juge that vengeth alle vileynnes and wronges, and he shal venge yow after that hym-self witnesseth, where as he seith, [2650] "Leveth the vengeance to me, and I shal do it."

Melibee answerde, 'If I ne venge me nat of the vileynye that men han doon to me, I sompne or warne hem that han doon to me that vileynye, and alle

othere, to do me another vileynye. For it is writen, "If thou take no vengeance of an oold vileynye, thou sompnest thyne adversaries to do thee a newe vileynye." And also for my suffrance men wolden do to me so muchel vileynye that I myghte neither bere it ne susteene, [2655] and so sholde I been put and holden over lowe. For men seyn, "In muchel suffrynge shul manye thynges falle unto thee whiche thou shalt nat mowe suffre."

'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'I graunte yow that over muchel suffraunce nys nat good, but yet ne solweth it nat ther-of that every persone to whom men doon vileynye take of it vengeance; for that aperteneth and longeth al oonly to the juges, for they shul venge the vileynnes and injuries; [2660] and therfore tho two auctoritees that ye han seyde above been oonly understonden in the juges, for whan they suffren over muchel the wronges and the vileynnes to be doon withouten punysshynge, they sompne nat a man al oonly for to do newe wronges, but they comanden it. Also a wys man seith that the juge that correcteth nat the synnere comandeth and biddeth hym do synne; and the juges and sovereyns myghten in hir land so muchel suffre of the shrewes and mysdoeres, [2665] that they sholden, by swich suffrance, by proces of tyme wexen of swich power and myght that they sholden putte out the juges and the sovereyns from hir places, and atte laste maken hem lesen hire lordshipes.

'But lat us now putte that ye have leve to venge yow. I seye ye been nat of myght and power as now to venge yow; for if ye wole maken comparisoun unto the myght of youre adversaries, ye shul fynde in manye thynges that I have shewed yow er this that hire condicioun is bettere than yours; [2670] and therfore seye I that it is good as now that ye suffre and be pacient.

'Forthermoore, ye knowen wel that

2635. *stroong paas*, H *strayt passage*.

2635. *Senec*, Publil. Syrus, Sent. 320.

2640. *broken she is*, H² *breketh sche*: for the quotation see Publil. Syrus, Sentent. 189: 'Fortuna vitrea est et, cum splendet, fragritur.'

2645. *Senec*, Publil. Syrus, Sentent. 173.

2660. *a wys man*, Cæc. Balbus, *De Nugis Phil.*: 'Qui non corripit peccantem peccare imperat.'

after the comune sawe, it is a woodnesse a man to stryve with a strengre, or a moore myghty man than he is hymself; and for to stryve with a man of evene strengthe, that is to seyn, with as stronge a man as he, it is peril; and for to stryve with a weyker man, it is folie; and therefore sholde a man flee stryvynge as muchel as he myghte; [2675] for Salomon seith, "It is a greet worshiþe to a man to kepen hym fro noyse and stryf." And if it so bifalle or happe that a man of gretter myght and strengthe than thou art do thee grevaunce, studie and bisye thee rather to stille the same grevaunce, than for to venge thee; for Senec seith, that "He putteth hym in greet peril that stryveth with a gretter man than he is hymself"; and Catoun seith, "If a man of hyer estaat or degree, or moore myghty than thou, do thee any or grevaunce, suffre hym, [2680] for he that oones hath greved thee, another tyme may releeve thee and helpe."

'Yet sette I caas ye have bothe myght and licence for to venge yow, I seye that ther be ful manye thynges that shul restreine yow of vengeance-takyng, and make yow for to encline to suffre and for to han pacience in the thynges that han been doon to yow. First and foreward, if ye wole considere the defautes that been in youre owene persone, [2685] for whiche defautes God hath suffred yow have this tribulacioun, as I have seyd yow heer biforn; for the poete seith, that we oghte paciently taken the tribulacions that comen to us whan we thynken and consideren that we han disserved to have hem; and Saint Gregorie seith, that whan a man considereth wel the nombre of his defautes and of his synnes, the peynes and the tribulaciouns that he suffreth semen the lesse unto hym; and in as muche as hym thynketh his synnes moore hevvy and grevous, [2690] in so

2670. *the comune sawe*, from Seneca, *De Ira*, ii. 34. 1.

2675. *Senec*, Publilius Syrus, Sent. 483.

2675. *Catoun*, *De Moribus*, iv. 39.

2680. *greved thee*, *I don the a grievance*.

muche semeth his payne the lighter, and the esier unto hym.

'Also ye owen to encline and bowe youre herte to take the pacience of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, as seith Seint Peter in his Epistles: "Jhesu Crist," he seith, "hath suffred for us and yeven ensample to every man to folwe and sewe hym; for he dide never synne, ne never cam ther a vileynous word out of his mouth; whan men cursed hym he cursed hem noght, and whan men betten hym he manaced hem noght." [2695] Also the grete pacience which the seintes that been in paradys han had in tribulaciouns that they han y-suffred withouten hir desert or gilt oghte muchel stiren yow to pacience. Forthermoore, ye sholde enforce yow to have pacience, considerynge that the tribulaciouns of this world but litel while endure, and soone passed been and goone, and the joye that a man seketh to have by pacience in tribulaciouns is perdurable, after that, the Apostle seith in his Epistle, [2700] "The joye of God," he seith, "is perdurable," that is to seyn, everelastyng.

'Also trowe and bilceth stedefastly that he nys nat wel y-norissed, ne wel y-taught, that kan nat have pacience, or wol nat receyve pacience; for Salomon seith that the doctrine and the wit of a man is knowen by pacience. And in another place he seith that he that is pacient governeth hym by greet prudence. And the same Salomon seith, "The angry and wrathful man maketh noyses, and the pacient man atempreth hem and stilleth." [2705] He seith also, "It is moore worth to be pacient, than for to be right strong," and he that may have the lordshiþe of his owene herte is moore to preyse than he that by his force or strengthe taketh grete citees; and therefore seith Seint Jame in his Epistle, that pacience is a greet vertu of perfeccioun.'

'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I graunte yow, dame Prudence, that pacience is a greet vertu of perfeccioun, but every man may nat have the perfeccioun that ye

seken, [2710] ne I nam nat of the nombre of right parfite men, for myn herte may never been in pees unto the tyme it be venged; and al be it so that it was greet peril to myne enemys to do me a vileynye in takyng vengeance upon me, yet tooken they noon heede of the peril, but fulfilleden hir wikked wyl, and hir corage; and therfore, me thynketh, men oghten nat reprove me, though I putte me in a litel peril for to venge me, [2715] and though I do a greet excesse, that is to seyn, that I venge oon outrage by another.'

'A!' quod dame Prudence, 'ye seyn youre wyl and as yow liketh, but in no caas of the world a man sholde nat doon outrage, ne excesse, for to vengen hym; for Cassidore seith that as yuele dooth he that vengeth hym by outrage as he that dooth the outrage; and therfore, ye shul venge yow after the ordre of right, that is to seyn, by the lawe, and noght by excesse ne by outrage. [2720] And also, if ye wol venge yow of the outrage of youre adversaries in oother manere than right comandeth, ye synnen; and therfore seith Senec, that a man shal never vengen shrewednesse by shrewednesse. And if ye seye that right axeth a man to defenden violence by violence, and fightyng by fightyng, certes ye seye sooth, whan the defense is doon anon withouten intervalle or withouten taryng or delay, for to defenden hym and nat for to vengen hym. [2725] And it bihoveth that a man putte swich attemperance in his defense that men have no cause ne matiere to repreven hym that defendeth hym of excesse and outrage, for ellis were it agayn resoun. *Pardee* ye knowen wel that ye maken no defense as now for to defende yow, but for to venge yow; and so sheweth it that ye han no wyl to do youre dede attemprely, and therfore me thynketh that pacience is good, for Salomon seith that he that is nat pacient shal have greet harm.'

2715. *Cassidore, Variar. i. 20.*

2720. *Senec, the pseudo-Seneca, De Moribus,*

139.

2725. *sheweth, H semeth, Camb.⁵ seweth.*

[2730] 'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I graunte yow that whan a man is incapient and wrooth, of that that toucheth hym noght and that aperteneth nat unto hym, though it harme hym, it is no wonder; for the lawe seith that he is coupable that entremetteth or medleth with swych thyng as aperteneth nat unto hym. And Salomon seith, that he that entremetteth hym of the noyse or strif of another man is lyk to hym that taketh an hound by the eris; for right as he that taketh a straunge hound by the eris is outhewhile biten with the hound, right in the same wise is it resoun that he have harm that by his incapience medleth hym of the noyse of another man whereas it aperteneth nat unto hym. [2735] But ye knowen wel that this dede, that is to seyn, my grief and my disese, toucheth me right ny, and therfore, though I be wrooth and incapient, it is no merveille; and, savyng youre grace, I kan nat seen that it myghte greetly harme me though I tooke vengeance, for I am richer and moore myghty than myne enemys been. And wel knowen ye that by moneye and by havynge grete possessions been alle the thynges of this world governed; [2740] and Salomon seith, that alle thynges obeyen to moneye.'

Whan Prudence hadde herd hir hous bonde avanten hym of his riches and of his moneye, dispreysynge the power of his adversaries, she spak, and seyde in this wise: 'Certes, deere sire, I graunte yow that ye been riche and myghty, and that the riches been goode to hem that han wel y-geten hem and wel konne usen hem; for, right as the body of a man may nat lyven withoute the soule, namoore may it lyve withouten temporeel goodes; [2745] and for riches may a man gete hym grete freendes. And therfore seith Pamphilles, "Ifanetherdesdoghter," seith he, "be riche, she may chesen of a thousand men which she wol take to her

2745. *Pamphilles, Pamphilus, De Amore:*

'Dummodo sit dives ejusdam nata bubulci
Eligit e mille quemlibet ipsa virum.'

housebonde," for of a thousand men oon wol nat forsaken hire ne refusen hire. And this Pamphilles seith also, "If thou be right happy, that is to seyn, if thou be right riche, thou shalt fynde a greet nombre of felawes and freendes; and if thy fortune change that thou wexe poure, farewel freendshipe and felaweshipe, [2750] for thou shalt be al alloone withouten any compaignye, but if it be the compaignye of poure folk." And yet seith this Pamphilles moreover, that they that been thralle and bonde of lynage shullen been maad worthy and noble by the riches. And right so as by riches ther comen manye goodes, right so by poverte come ther manye harmes and yvels; for greet poverte constreyneth a man to do manye yvels, and therfore clepeth Cassidore poverte the mooder of ruyne,—[2755] that is to seyn, the mooder of overthrowynge or fallynge down. And therfore seith Piers Alfonc, "Oon of the gretteste adversitees of this world is whan a free man, by kynde or by burthe, is constreyned by poverte to eten the almesse of his enemy"; and the same seith Innocent in oon of his bookes; he seith that sorweful and myshappy is the condicioun of a poure beggere, for if he axe nat his mete he dyeth for hunger, [2760] and if he axe, he dyeth for shame; and algates necessitee constreyneth hym to axe. And therfore seith Salomon that bet it is to dye than for to have swich poverte. And as the same Salomon seith, "Bette it is to dye of bitter deeth than for to lyven in swich wise." By this resons that I have seid unto yow, and by manye othere resons that I koude seye, I graunte yow that riches been goode to hem that geten hem wel and to hem that wel usen tho riches. [2765] And therfore wol I shewe yow how ye

2750. *Cassidore, Variar.* ix. 13: 'mater criminum necessitas.

2755. *Piers Alfonc, Discip.* Cler. iv. 5.

2755. *Innocent* [III.], *De Contemptu Mundi*, i. 14; the passage versified by Chaucer in the Prologue to the Man of Law's Tale.

2765. *wol I shewe you*, etc. The substance of the next seventy paragraphs is not given by

shul have yow, and how ye shul bere yow in gaderynge of riches, and in what manere ye shul usen hem.

'First, ye shul geten hem withouten greet desir, by good leyser, sokyngly, and nat over hastily; for a man that is to desiryng to gete riches abaundoneth hym first to thefte, and to alle other yvels; and therfore seith Salomon, "He that hasteth hym to bisily to wexe riche shal be noon innocent." He seith also, that the riches that hastily cometh to a man soone and lightly gooth and passeth fro a man; [2770] but that riches that cometh litel and litel wexeth alwey and multiplieth. And, sire, ye shul geten riches by youre wit and by youre travaille unto youre profit, and that withouten wrong or harm-doyng to any oother persone; for the lawe seith that ther maketh no man himselven riche if he do harm to another wight: this is to seyn, that nature deffendeth and forbedeth by right that no man make hymself riche unto the harm of another persone. [2775] And Tullius seith that no sorwe, ne no drede of deeth, ne no thyng that may falle unto a man, is so muchel agayns nature as a man to encressen his owene profit to the harm of another man. And though the grete men and the myghty men geten riches moore lightly than thou, yet shaltou nat been ydel ne slow to do thy profit; for thou shalt in alle wise flee ydelnesse; for Salomon seith that ydelnesse techeth a man to do manye yvels. [2780] And the same Salomon seith that he that travaileth and bisieth hym to tilien his land shal eten breed, but he that is ydel and casteth hym to no bisynesse ne occupacioun shal falle into poverte, and dye for hunger. And he that is ydel and slow kan never fynde covenable tyme for to doon his profit; for ther is a versifiour seith that the ydel man excuseth hym in wynter by cause of

Albertanus Brixiensis in his *Liber Consolationis*, but he refers to a section of his own work *De Amore Dei et Proximi*, whence the French translator, whom Chaucer follows, doubtless took them.

the grete coold, and in somer by enchesoun of the heete. For thise causes seith Caton, "Waketh and enclyneth nat yow over muchel for to slepe, for over muchel reste norisseth and causeth manye vices." [2785] And therfore seith Seint Jerome, "Dooth somme goode dedes, that the devel, which is oure enemy, ne fynde yow nat unoccupied. For the devel ne taketh nat lightly unto his werkyng swiche as he fyndeth occupied in goode werkes."

"Thanne thus in getyng riches ye mosten flee ydelnesse; and afterward ye shul use the riches whiche ye have geten by youre wit and by youre travaille, in swich a manere that men holde nat yow to scars, ne to sparynge, ne to fool large,—that is to seyn, over large a spendere; [2790] for right as men blamen an avaricious man by cause of his scarsetee and chyngerie, in the same wise is he to blame that spendeth over largely. And therfore seith Caton, "Use," he seith, "(thy riches that thou hast geten in swich a manere that men have no matiere ne cause to calle thee neither wrecche ne chynche; for it is a greet shame to a man to have a povere herte and a riche purs." [2795] He seith also, "The goodes that thou hast y-geten, use hem by mesure, that is to seyn, spende hem mesurably; for they that folly wasten and despenden the goodes that they han, whan they han namore propre of hir owene, they shapen hem to take the goodes of another man."

"I seye thanne that ye shul fleen avarice, usynge youre riches in swich manere that men seye nat that youre riches been y-buried, [2800] but that ye have hem in youre myght and in youre weeldyng; for a wys man repreve the avaricious man and seith thus in two vers: "Wherto and why burieth a man his goodes by his grete avarice, and knoweth wel that nedes moste he dye, for deeth is the ende of every man, as in this present lyf; and for what cause or enchesoun joyne the hym or knytteth he hym so faste unto his goodes [2805] that alle his wittes mowen nat disseveren hym or

departen hym from his goodes; and knoweth wel, or oghte knowe, that whan he is deed he shal no thyng bere with hym out of this world?" And therfore seith Seint Augustyn, that the avaricious man is likned unto helle, that the moore it swelweth the moore desir it hath to swelwe and devoure. And as wel as ye wolde eschewe to be called an avaricious man or chynche, [2810] as wel sholde ye kepe yow and governe yow in swich a wise that men calle yow nat fool-large. Therfore seith Tullius, "The goodes," he seith, "of thyn hous ne sholde nat been hyd, ne kept so cloos but that they myghte been opened by pitee and debonairetee,"—that is to seyn, to yeven part to hem that han greet nede,— "ne thy goodes shullen nat been so opene to been every mannes goodes."

"Afterward, in getyng of youre riches and in usynge hem, ye shul alwey have thre thynges in youre herte, [2815] that is to seyn, oure Lord God, conscience, and good name. First, ye shul have God in youre herte, and for no riches ye shullen do no thyng which may in any manere displese God, that is youre creatour and makere; for after the word of Salomon, "It is better to have a litel good with the love of God, than to have muchel good and tresour and lese the love of his Lord God." [2820] And the prophete seith that better it is to been a good man and have litel good and tresour, than to been holden a shrewe, and have grete riches. And yet seye I ferthermoore, that ye sholde alwey doon youre bisynesse to gete yow riches, so that ye gete hem with good conscience; and tha postle seith that ther nys thyng in this world of which we sholden have so greet joye as whan oure conscience bereth us good witnesse; [2825] and the wise man seith, "The substance of a man is ful good whan synne is nat in mannes conscience."

"Afterward, in getyng of youre riches and in usynge of hem, yow moste have greet bisynesse and greet

diligence that youre goode name be alwey kept and conserved, for Salomon seith that better it is and moore it availleth a man to have a good name than for to have grete riches. And therefore he seith in another place, "Do greet diligence," seith Salomon, "in keepyng of thy freend and of thy goode name, [2830] for it shal lenger abide with thee than any tresour, be it never so precious." And certes, he sholde nat be called a gentil man that after God and good conscience, alle thynges left, ne dooth his diligence and bisynesse to kepen his good name. And Cassidore seith that it is signe of gentil herte whan a man loveth and desireth to han a good name. And therefore seith Seint Augustyn, that ther been two thynges that arn necessarie and nedefulle, and that is, good conscience and good loos; [2835] that is to seyn, good conscience to thyn owene persone inward, and good loos for thy neighebores outward. And he that trusteth hym so muchel in his goode conscience that he displeseth and setteth at noght his goode name or loos, and rekketh noght though he kepe nat his goode name, nys but a cruel cheryl.

"Sire, now have I shewed yow how ye shul do in getyng^e riches, and how ye shullen usen hem, and I se wel that for the trust that ye han in youre riches ye wole move werre and bataille. [2840] I conseille yow that ye bigynne no werre in trust of youre riches, for they ne suffisen noght werres to mayntene. And therefore seith a philosophre, "That man that desireth and wole algates han werre shal never have suffisaunce, for the richer that he is, the gretter despenses moste he make if he wole have worshipec and victorie." And Salomon seith that the gretter riches that a man hath, the moore spendours he hath. And, deere sire, al be it so that for youre riches ye mowe have muchel folk, [2845] yet bihoveth it nat, ne it is nat good to bigynne werre where as ye mowe in oother manere have pees unto youre worshipec and profit. For

the victories of batailles that been in this world lyen nat in greet nombre or multitude of the peple, ne in the vertu of man, but it lith in the wyl and in the hand of oure Lord God Almyghty.

"And therefore Judas Machabeus, which was Goddes knyght, whan he sholde fighte agayn his adversarie that hadde a greet nombre and a gretter multitude of folk and strengre than was this peple of Machabee, [2850] yet he reconforted his litel compaignye, and seyde right in this wise: "Als lightly," quod he, "may oure Lord God Almyghty yeve victorie to a fewe folk as to many folk, for the victorie of a bataille comth nat by the grete nombre of peple, but it come from oure Lord God of hevene."

"And, deere sire, for as muchel as ther is no man certein if he be worthy that God yeve hym victorie [no more than he is sure whether he is worthy of the love of God] or naught, after that Salomon seith, [2855] therefore every man sholde greetly drede werres to bigynne. And by cause that in batailles fallen manye perils, and happeth outhur while that as soone is the grete man slayn as the litel man; and as it is writen in the seconde book of Kynges, "The dedes of batailles been aventureuse and no thyng certeyne, for as lightly is oon hurt with a spere as another"; [2860] and for ther is gret peril in werre, therefore sholde a man flee and eschue werre, in as muchel as a man may goodly, for Salomon seith, "He that loveth peril shal falle in peril."

After that dame Prudence hadde spoken in this manere, Melibee answerde and seyde, "I see wel, dame Prudence, that by youre faire wordes, and by youre resouns that ye han shewed me, that the werre liketh yow no thyng; but I have nat yet herd youre conseil, how I shal do in this nede."

2845. *greet nombre*, H⁶ *gretter* for *greet*.

2850. *compaignye*, H *peple*.

2850. [*no more*, etc.] The words bracketed are supplied from the French.

2855. *manye perils*, H *many mervayles and periles*.

[2865] 'Certes,' quod she, 'I conseilte yow that ye accorde with youre adversaries and that ye have pees with nem; for Seint Jame seith, in his Epistles, that by concord and pees the smale richesses wexen grete, and by debaat and discord the grete richesses fallen down; and ye knowen wel that oon of the gretteste and moost sovereyn thyng that is in this world is unytee and pees. And therfore seyde oure Lord Jhesu Crist to his Apostles in this wise, [2870] "Wel happy and blessed been they that loven and purchacen pees, for they been called children of God."'

A! quod Melibee, 'now se I wel that ye loven nat myn honour ne my worships. Ye knowen wel that myne adversaries han bigonnen this debaat and bryge by hire outrage, and ye se wel that they ne requeren ne preyen me nat of pees, ne they asken nat to be reconciled. Wol ye thanne that I go and meke me and obeye me to hem and crie hem mercy? [2875] For sothe that were nat my worships; for right as men seyn that over greet humylnesse engendreth dispreysynge, so fareth it by to greet humylitee or mekenesse.'

Thanne bigan dame Prudence to maken semblant of wratthe, and seyde, 'Certes, sire, sauf youre grace, I love youre honour and youre profit as I do myn owene, and ever have doon; ne ye, ne noon oother, syen never the contraire! [2880] And yit if I hadde seyde that ye sholde han purchaced the pees and the reconsiliacioun, I ne hadde nat muchel mistaken me, ne seyde amys; for the wise man seith, "the dissensioun bigynneth by another man and the reconsilyng bygynneth by thy self"; and the prophete seith, "Flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse, seke pees and folwe it, as muchel as in thee is." Yet seyde I nat that ye shul rather pursue to youre adversaries for pees than they shuln to yow; [2885] for I knowe wel that ye been so

2880. *shrewednesse, H shame and schrewednesse.*

hard-herted that ye wol do no thyng for me; and Salomon seith, "He that hath over hard an herte atte laste he shal myshappe and mystyde."'

Whanne Melibee hadde herd dame Prudence maken semblant of wratthe, he seyde in this wise: 'Dame, I prey yow that ye be nat displesed of thynges that I seye, for ye knowe wel that I am angry and wrooth, and that is no wonder, [2890] and they that been wrothe witen nat wel what they don, ne what they seyn; therfore the prophete seith that troubled eyen han no cleer sighte. But seyeth and conseilte me as yow liketh, for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire, and if ye repreve me of my folye I am the moore holden to love yow and preyse yow; for Salomon seith that he that repreve hym that dooth folye [2895] he shal fynde gretter grace than he that deceyve hym by sweete wordes.'

Thanne seide dame Prudence, 'I make no semblant of wratthe ne anger but for youre grete profit; for Salomon seith, "He is moore worth that repreveþ or chideth a fool for his folye, shewynge hym semblant of wratthe, than he that supporteth hym and preyseth hym in his mysdoynge, and laugheth at his folye." And this same Salomon seith afterward that by the sorweful visage of a man, that is to seyn, by the sory and hevy countenance of a man, [2900] the fool correcteth and amendeth hymself.'

Thanne seyde Melibee, 'I shal nat konne answer to so manye faire resouns as ye putten to me and shewen; seyeth shortly youre wyl and youre conseil, and I am al redy to fulfillle and parfoume it.'

Thanne dame Prudence discovered al hir wyl to hym, and seyde, 'I conseilte yow,' quod she, 'aboven alle thynges, that ye make pees bitwene God and yow, [2905] and beth reconciled unto hym and to his grace; for as I have seyde yow heer biforn, God hath suffred yow to have this tribulacioun and disese for youre synnes, and if ye do as I sey yow, God

2900. *hir wyl, H hire counsail and hire wille.*

wol sende youre adversaries unto yow and maken hem fallen at youre feet redy to do youre wyl and youre comandementz; for Salomon seith, "Whan the condicioun of man is plesaunt and likynge to God, [2910] he chaungeth the hertes of the mannes adversaries and constreyneth hem to biseken hym of pees and of grace." And I prey yow, lat me speke with youre adversaries in privee place; for they shul nat knowe that it be of youre wyl or youre assent; and thanne, whan I knowe hir wil and hire entente, I may conseilte yow the moore seurely.'

'Dame,' quod Melibee, 'dooth youre wil and youre likynge, [2915] for I putte me hoolly in youre disposicioun and ordinaunce.'

Thanne dame Prudence, whan she saugh the goode wyl of hir housbonde, delibered and took avys in himself, thinkinge how she myghte brynge this nede unto a good conclusioun and to a good ende. And whan she saugh hir tyme she sente for these adversaries to come unto hire into a pryvee place, and shewed wisely unto hem the grete goodes that comen of pees, [2920] and the grete harmes and perils that been in werre; and seyde to hem in a goodly manere how that hem oughten have greet repentance of the injurie and wrong that they hadden doon to Melibee, hir lord, and to hire, and to hire doghter.

And whan they herden the goodliche wordes of dame Prudence, they weren so surprised and ravysshed, and hadden so greet joye of hire, that wonder was to telle. [2925] 'A! lady,' quod they, 'ye han shewed unto us the blessinge of swetnesse after the sawe of David the prophete; for the reconsilyng which we been nat worthy to have in no manere, but we oghte requeren it with greet contricioun and humylitee, ye, of youre grete goodnesse, have presented unto us. Now se we wel that the science and the konnyng of Salomon is ful trewe, [2930] for he seith that sweete wordes multiplen and encreesen freendes, and

maken shrewes to be debonaire and meeke.

'Certes,' quod they, 'we putten oure dede and al oure matere and cause al hoolly in youre goode wyl, and been redy to obeye to the speche and comandement of my lord Melibee. And therfore, deere and benygne lady, we preien yow and biseke yow as mekely as we konne and mowen, that it lyke unto youre grete goodnesse to fulfillen in dede youre goodliche wordes, [2935] for we consideren and knowelichen that we han offended and greved my lord Melibee out of mesure, so ferforth that we be nat of power to maken his amendes; and therefore we oblige and bynden us and oure freendes to doon al his wyl and his comandementz. But peraventure he hath swich hevynesse and swich wratthe to usward by cause of oure offense, that he wole enjoyne us swich a payne as we mowe nat bere ne susteene, [2940] and therefore, noble lady, we biseke to youre wommanly pitee to taken swich avysement in this nede that we, ne oure freendes, be nat desherited, ne destroyed, thurgh oure folye.'

'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'it is an hard thyng and right perilous that a man putte hym al outrely in the arbitracioun and juggement, and in the myght and power of his enemy, for Salomon seith, "Leeveth me, and yeveth credence to that I shal seyn; I seye," quod he, "ye peple, folk and governours of hooly chirche, [2945] to thy sone, to thy wyf, to thy freend, ne to thy broother, ne yeve thou never myght ne maistrie of thy body whil thou lyvest."

'Now sithen he deffendeth that man shal nat yeven to his broother, ne to his freend, the myght of his body, by strengre resoun he deffendeth and forbedeth a man to yeven hymself to his enemy. And natheles I conseilte you that ye mystruste nat my lord; [2950] for I woot wel and knowe verraily that he is debonaire and meeke, large, curteys, and no thyng desirous, ne covetous of good ne riches;

for ther nys nothyng in this world that he desireth, save oonly worshippe and honour. Forthermoore I knowe wel and am right seur that he shal no thyng doon in this nede withouten my conseil, and I shal so werken in this cause that, by grace of oure Lord God, ye shul been reconciled unto us.'

[2955] Thanne seyden they with o voys, 'Worshipful lady, we putten us and oure goodes al fully in youre wil and disposicioun, and been redy to comen what day that it like unto youre noblesse to lymyte us or assigne us, for to maken oure obligacioun and boond as strong as it liketh unto youre goodnesse, that we mowe fulfille the wille of yow and of my lord Melibee.'

Whan dame Prudence hadde herd the answeres of thise men, she bad hem goon agayn prively, [2960] and she retourned to hir lord Melibee, and tolde hym how she foond his adversaries ful repentant, knowelechyng ful lowely hir synnes and trespas, and how they were redy to suffren all payne, requiryng and preiynge hym of mercy and pitee.

Thanne seyde Melibee, 'He is wel worthy to have pardoun and foryifnesse of his synne that excuseth nat his synne, but knowlecheth it and repenteth hym, axinge indulgence. [2965] For Sence seith, "Ther is the remissioun and foryifnesse, where as confessioun is"; for confessioun is neighbore to innocence. And he saith in another place that he that hath shame of his synne, and knowlecheth it, is worthi remyscioun. And therefore I assente and conforme me to have pees; but it is good that we do it nat with-outen the assent and wyl of oure freendes.'

Thanne was Prudence right glad and joyeful, and seyde, [2970] 'Certes, sirc,' quod she, 'ye han wel and goodly

2965. *Senec*, the pseudo-Seneca, *De Moribus*, 94.

2965. *And he saith* . . . *remyscioun*, text from Petworth and Lansdowne (the latter reading *mercy* for *remyscioun*); other MSS. omit wholly or in part.

answered, for right as by the conseil, assent and helpe of youre freendes, ye han been stired to venge yow and maken werre, right so withouten hire conseil shul ye nat accorden yow, ne have pees with youre adversaries; for the lawe seith, "Ther nys no thyng so good by wey of kynde as a thyng to been unbounde by hym that it was y-bounde."

And thanne dame Prudence, withouten delay or taryng, sente anon hire messages for hire kyn and for hire olde freendes, whiche that were trewe and wyse, [2975] and tolde hem by ordre, in the presence of Melibee, al this mateere as it is aboven expressed and declared, and preyden that they wolde yeven hire avys and conseil, what best were to doon in this nede. And whan Melibees freendes hadde taken hire avys and deliberacioun of the forside mateere, and hadden examyned it by greet bisynesse and greet diligence, they yave ful conseil for to have pees and reste, [2980] and that Melibee sholde receyve with good herte hise adversaries to foryifnesse and mercy.

And whan dame Prudence hadde herd the assent of hir lord Melibee, and the conseil of his freendes accorde with hire wille and hire entencioun, she was wonderly glad in hire herte and seyde, 'Ther is an old proverbe,' quod she, 'seith that the goodnesse that thou mayst do this day, do it, [2985] and abide nat, ne delaye it nat til to morwe. And therefore I conseilte that ye sende youre messages, swiche as been discrete and wise, unto youre adversaries, tellyng hem on youre bihalve, that if they wole trete of pees and of accord, [2990] that they shape hem, withouten delay or taryng, to comen unto us.' Which thyng parfourned was in dede; and whanne thise trespassours and repentyng folk of hire folies,—that is to seyn, the adversaries of Melibee,—hadden herd what thise messagers seyden unto hem, they weren right glad and joyeful, and answereden ful mekely and benignly, yeldyng graces and thankynges to hir lord Melibee and to al his com-

paignye, [2995] and shopen hem withouten delay to go with the messagers, and obeye to the comandement of hir lord Melibee.

And right anon they taken hire wey to the court of Melibee, and taken with hem somme of hire trewe freendes to maken feith for hem and for to been hire borwes. And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibee, he seyde hem thise wordes: 'It standeth thus,' quod Melibee, 'and sooth it is, that ye, [3000] causeless and withouten skile and resoun, han doon grete injuries and wronges to me and to my wyf Prudence, and to my doghter also; for ye han entred in to myn hous by violence, and have doon swich outrage that alle men knowen wel that ye have disserved the deeth, and therefore wol I knowe and wite of yow [3005] wheither ye wol putte the punysshment and the chastisinge and the vengeance of this outrage in the wyl of me and of my wyf Prudence, or ye wol nat?'

Thanne the wiseste of hem thre answerde for hem alle, and seyde, 'Sire,' quod he, 'we knowen wel that we been unworthy to comen unto the court of so greet a lord, and so worthy as ye been, for we han so greetly mystaken us, and han offended and agilt in swich a wise agayn youre heigh lordshipe that trewely we han disserved the deeth; [3010] but yet for the grete goodnesse and debonairetee that al the world witnesseth in youre persone, we submytten us to the excellence and benignitee of youre gracious lordshipe, and been redy to obeie to alle youre comandementz, bisekyng yow that of youre merciable pitee ye wol considere oure grete repentaunce and lough submyssioun, and graunten us foryevenesse of oure outrageous trespas and offense; [3015] for wel we knowe that youre liberal grace and mercy stretchen hem ferther into goodnesse than doon oure outrageouse giltes and trespas into wikkednesse; al be it that cursedly and dampnably we han agilt agayn youre heigh lordshipe.'

Thanne Melibee took hem up fro the ground ful benignely, and receyved hire obligaciouns and hir boondes by hire othes upon hire plegges and borwes, and assigned hem a certeyn day to retourne unto his court, [3020] for to accepte and receyve the sentence and juggement that Melibee wolde comande to be doon on hem by the causes aforesayd; whiche thynges ordeyned, every man retourned to his hous.

And whan that dame Prudence saugh hir tyme, she freyned and axed hir lord Melibee what vengeance he thoughte to taken of his adversaries.

To which Melibee answerde and seyde, 'Certes,' quod he, 'I thynke and purpose me fully [3025] to desherite hem of al that ever they han, and for to putte hem in exil for ever.'

'Certes,' quod dame Prudence, 'this were a cruel sentence and muchel agayn resoun; for ye been riche ynough and han no nede of oother mennes good, and ye myghte lightly in this wise gete yow a covetous name, which is a vicious thyng and oghte been eschued of every good man; [3030] for after the sawe of the word of the Apostle, "Coveitise is roote of alle harmes." And therefore it were better for yow to lese so muchel good of youre owene than for to taken of hir good in this manere; for better it is to lesen with worshipe, than it is to wyne with vileynye and shame; and everi man oghte to doon his diligence and his bisynesse to geten hym a good name. And yet shal he nat oonly bisie hym in kepyng of his good name, [3035] but he shal also enforcen hym alwey to do som thyng by which he may renouvelle his good name; for it is written "that the olde good loos and good name of a man is soone goon and passed whan it is nat newed ne renouvelled."

'And as touchyng that ye seyn ye wole exile youre adversaries, that thynketh me muchel agayn resoun, and out of mesure, considered the power that they han yeve yow upon himself. [3040] And

it is writen that he is worthy to lesen his privilege that mysuseth the myght and the power that is yeven hym. And I sette cas, ye myghte enjoyne hem that payne by right and by lawe, which I trowe ye mowe nat do; I seye ye mighte nat putten it to execucioun peraventure, and thanne were it likly to retourne to the werre as it was biforn; [3045] and therfore if ye wole that men do yow obeisance, ye moste deemen moore curteisly, this is to seyn, ye moste yeven moore esy sentences and juggedmentz. For it is writen that he that moost curteisly comandeth, to hym men moost obeyen. And therfore I prey yow that in this necessitee and in this nede ye caste yow to overcome youre herte. For Senec seith that he that overcometh his herte overcometh twies; [3050] and Tullius seith, "Ther is no thyng so comendable in a greet lord as whan he is debonaire and meeke, and appeseth lightly." And I prey yow that ye wole forbere now to do vengeance in swich a manere, that youre goode name may be kept and conserved, and that men mowe have cause and mateere to preyse yow of pitee and of mercy, [3055] and that ye have no cause to repente yow of thyng that ye doon; for Senec seith, "He overcometh in an yvel manere that repenteth hym of his victorie." Wherefore, I pray yow, lat mercy been in youre mynde and in youre herte, to theffect and entente that God Almyghty have mercy on yow in his laste juggement; for Seint Jame seith in his Epistle, "Juggement withouten mercy shal be doon to hym that hath no mercy of another wight!"

[3060] Whanne Melibee hadde herd the grete skiles and resouns of dame Prudence, and hire wise informaciouns and techynges, his herte gan enclyne to the wil of his wyf, considerynge hir trewe entente, and conformed hym anon and

assented fully to werken after hir conseil; and thonked God, of whom procedeth al vertu and alle goodnesse, that hym sente a wyf of so greet discrecioun.

And whan the day cam that his adversaries sholde appieren in his presence, [3065] he spak unto hem ful goodly, and seyde in this wyse: 'Al be it so that of youre pride and presumpcioun and folie, and of youre necligence and unkonnyng, ye have mysborn yow and trespassed unto me; yet, for as muche as I see and biholde youre grete humylitee, [3070] and that ye been sory and repentant of youre giltes, it constreyneth me to doon yow grace and mercy. Therfore I receyve yow to my grace and foryeve yow outrely alle the offenses, injuries and wronges that ye have doon agayn me and myne; to this effect and to this ende, that God of his endelees mercy wole at the tyme of oure dyngge foryeven us oure giltes that we han trespassed to hym in this wrecched world; [3075] for doutelees if we be sory and repentant of the synnes and giltes whiche we han trespassed in the sighte of oure Lord God, he is so free and so merciable that he wole foryeven us oure giltes, and bryngen us to his blisse that never hath ende.' *Amen.*

The murie wordes of the Hoost to the Monk

Whan ended was my tale of Melibee, And of Prudence and hire benignyte, Oure Hoste seyde, 'As I am feithful man, And by that precious corpus Madrian, I haddé levere than a barel ale 3083 That gooddelief my wyf hadde herd this tale! For she nys no thyng of swich pacience As was this Melibeus wyf Prudence. By Goddés bonés! whan I bete myknaves, She bryngeth me forth the greté clobbéd staves And crieth, "Slee the doggés everichoon,

3045. *Senec seith*, Publil. Syrus, Sent. 64: 'Bis vincit qui se in victoria vincit.'

3050. *Tullius, De Offic.* i. 25. 88.

3055. *Senec seith*, Publil. Syrus, Sent. 366.

3055. *mercy*, H. *mercy and pite*.

3060. *conseil*, H. *reed and counseil*.

3082. *corpus Madrian*, the body of S. Mathurin, which would not accept burial except in France, and then worked miracles.

And brek hem, bothè bak and every
boon ! " 3090

' And if that any neighèbore of myne
Wol nat in chirchè to my wyf encline,
Or be so hardy to hire to trespæce,
Whan she comth home she rampeth in
my face,

And crieth, " Falsè coward ! wrek thy wyf !
By corpus bonès ! I wol have thy knyf,
And thou shalt have my distaf and go
spynne ! "

Fro day to nyght, right thus she wol
bigynne, — 3098

" Allas ! " she seith, " that ever I was shape
To wedden a milksope or a coward ape,
That wol been overlad with every wight !
Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyvès
right ! "

' This is my lif, but if that I wol fighte ;
And out at dore anon I moot me dighte,
Or elles I am but lost, but if that I
Be lik a wildè leoun, fool-hardy.

I woot wel she wol do me slee som day
Som neighèbore, and thannè go my way ;
For I am perilous with knyf in honde ;
Al be it that I dar hire nat withstonde,
For she is byg in armès, by my feith, 3111
That shal he fynde that hire mysdooth
or seith.

But lat us passe away fro this mateere.

' My lord the Monk, ' quod he, ' be
myrie of cheere,

For ye shul telle a talè trewely.

Ló ! Rouchèstre stant heer fastè by !

Ryde forth, myn owenè lord, brek nat
oure game,

But by my trouthe I knowè nat youre
name, — 3118

Wher shal I callè you my lord daun John,
Or daun Thomás, or ellès daun Albon ?
Of what hous be ye, by youre fader kyn ?
I vowe to God, thou hast a ful fair skyn !
It is a gentil pasture ther thow goost ;
Thou art nat lyk a penant, or a goost.
Upon my feith, thou art som officer,
Som worthy sexteyn, or som celerer,
For by my fader soule, as to my doom
Thou art amaister, whan thou art at hoom ;
No pourè cloysterer, ne no novys,

3175. *sonn*, H an.

Bút a governour, wily and wys, 3130
And therwithal of brawnès and of bones,
A wel-farynge personè, for the nones.
I pray to God, yeve hym confusioun
That first thee broghte unto religioun.
Thou woldest han been a tredèfowel a right ;
Haddestow as greet a leeve as thou hast
myght

To parfoune al thy lust in engendrure,
Thou haddest bigeten ful many a créature.
Allas ! why werestow so wyd a cope ? 3139
God yeve me sorwe ! but and I were a pope,
Nat oonly thou, but every myghty man,
Though he wereshorn ful hye upon his pan,
Sholde have a wyf, — for al the world is
lorn ;

Religioun hath take up al the corn
Of treydyng, and we borel men been
shrympes ;

Of fieble trees ther comen wrecched ympes.
This maketh that oure heirès beth so
sklendre

And feble that they may nat wel engendre ;
This maketh that oure wyvès wole assaye
Religious folk, for ye mowe better paye
Of Venus paicèmentz than mowè we. 3151
God woot, no Lussheburches payen ye !
But be nat wrooth, my lord, for that I
pleye.

Ful ofte in game a soothe I have herd seye !'

This worthy Monk took al in pacience
And seyde, ' I wol doon al my diligence,
As fer as sowneth into honestee,
To tellè yow a tale, or two, or three ;
And if yow list to herkne hyderward,
I wol yow seyn the lyf of Seint Edward,
Or ellis, first, tragédies wol I telle, 3161
Of whiche I have an hundred in my celle.

' Tragédie is to seyn a certeyn storie,
As oldè bookès maken us mémorie,
Of hym that stood in greet prosperitee,
And is y-fallen out of heigh degree
Into myserie, and endeth wrecchedly ;
And they ben versifièd communely
Of six feet, which men clepen exametron.
In prose eek been endited many oon, 3170

3137. *lust*, H wil.

3138. *ful*, om. H².

3152. *Lussheburghes*, base coins imported
from Luxemburg.

And eek in meetre in many a sondry wyse ;
 Lo, this declaryng oghte ynogh suffise.
 Now herkneth, if yow liketh for to heere ;
 But first, I yow biseeke in this mateere,
 Though I by ordre tellé nat thise thynges
 Be it of popés, emperours, or kynges,
 After hir agés as men writen fynde,
 But tellen hem, som bifore and som
 bihynde,
 As it now comth unto my remembraunce,
 Have me excuséd of myn ignoraunce.' 3180

MONK'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Monkes Tale, de
 Casibus Virorum Illustrium*

I wol biwaille, in manere of tragédie,
 The harm of hem that stooode in heigh
 degree,
 And fillen so that ther nas no remédie
 To brynge hem out of hir adversitee ;
 For certain, whan that Fortune list to flee,
 Ther may no man the cours of hire with-
 holde.
 Lat no man truste on blynd prosperitee ;
 Be war by thise ensamplés trewe and olde.

At LUCIFER,—though he an angel were,
 And nat a man,—at hym wol I bigynne,
 For though Fortunc may noon angel dere,
 From heigh degree yet fel he for his synne
 Doun into hellé, where he yet is inne.
 O Lucifer ! brightest of angels alle,
 Now artow Sathanas, that mayst nat
 twynne
 Out of miserie in which that thou art falle.

Lo ADAM, in the feeld of Damyssene,
 With Goddés owné fynger wrought was he,
 And nat bigeten of mannés sperme unclene,
 And welte all paradys savyng o tree. 3200

De Casibus Virorum Illustrium. The title indicates Chaucer's obligations to Boccaccio's *De Cas. Vir. et Feminarum Illust.*, from which and the same author's *De Claris Mulieribus*, Boethius, *De Consolatione*, the *Roman de la Rose*, and the Bible the monk takes his 'old ensamples.'

3189. *Lucifer*, Chaucer's addition ; Boccaccio begins with Adam.

3197. *Damyssene*, Damascus ; Boccaccio's 'Ager, qui postea Damascenus.'

Hadde never worldly man so heigh degree
 As Adam, til he for mys-governance
 Was dryven out of hys hye prosperitee
 To labour, and to helle, and to mes-
 chaunce.

Lo SAMPSON, which that was annunciat
 By angel, longe er his nativitee,
 And was to God Almyghty consecrat,
 And stood in noblesse whil he myghte see.
 Was never swich another as was hec,
 To speke of strengthe, and therwith
 hardynesse ; 3210
 But to his wyvés toolde he his secrec,
 Thurgh whiche he slow hymself for
 wrecchednesse.

Sampson, this noble almyghty champioun,
 Withouten wepene save his handés tweye,
 He slow and al to-renté the leoun,
 Toward his weddyng walkyng by the
 weye.
 His falsé wyf koude hym so plese and
 preye
 Til she his conseil knew ; and she, un-
 trewe,
 Unto his foos his conseil gan biwreye,
 And hym forsook, and took another newe.

Thre hundred foxes took Sampson for ire,
 And alle hir taylès he togydré bond,
 And sette the foxes taylès alle on fire,
 For he on every tayl had knyt a brond ;
 And they brende alle the cornés in that
 lond,
 And alle hire olyveres, and vynés eke.
 A thousand men he slow eek with his
 hond,
 And hadde no wepene but an asses cheke.

Whan they were slayn so thurstéd hym
 that he 3229
 Was wel ny lorn, for which he gan to preye
 That God wolde on his peyne han som
 pitee,
 And sende hym drynke, or ellés moste
 he deye
 And of this asses cheké, that was dreye,

3205. *annunciat*, from Boccaccio 'Prænunciante per angelum Deo,' but Chaucer takes his points mainly from the Bible.

Out of a wang-tooth sprang anon a welle,
Of which he drank ynow, shortly to seye ;
Thus heelpen hym God, as *Judicum* can
telle.

By verray force at Gazan, on a nyght,
Maugree Philistiens of that citee,
The gatés of the toun he hath up-plyght,
And on his bak y-caryed hem hath hee ³²⁴⁰
Hye on an hillé, that men myghte hem see.
Onoble, almyghty Sampson, liefand deere,
Had thou nat toold to women thy secree,
In all this world ne haddé been thy peere !

This Sampson never ciser drank, ne wyn,
Ne on his heed cam rasour noon, ne sheere,
By precept of the messenger divyn ;
For alle his strengthés in his heerés were ;
And fully twenty wynter, yeer by yeere,
He hadde of Israel the governaunce ; ³²⁵⁰
But sooné shal he wepé many a teere,
For women shal hym bryngen to mes-
chaunce.

Unto his lemman Dalida he tolde
That in his heeris al his strengthé lay,
And falsly to his foomen she hym solde ;
And slepyng in hir barm upon a day
Shemad to clippe or shere his heres away,
And made his foomen al his craft espyen ;
And whan that they hym foond in this array,
They bounde hym faste and putten out
his eyen. ³²⁶⁰

But er his heer were clippéd or y-shave,
Ther was no boond with which men
myghte him bynde ;
But now is he in prison in a cave,
Where-as they made hym at the queerné
grynde.

O noble Sampson, strongest of mankynde,
O whilom juge, in glorie and in richesse !
Now maystow wepen with thyne eyen
blynde,

Sith thou fro wele art falle in wrecched-

Thende of this caytyf was as I shal seye ;
His foomen made a fecste upon a day,
And made hym as a fool biforn hem pleye ;

³²³⁶. *Judicum*, Book of Judges.

And this was in a temple of greet array ;
But atté laste he made a foul affray ;
For he the pilers shook and made hem
falle,

And doun fil temple and al, and ther it lay ;
And slow hymself, and eek his foomen alle :

This is to seyn, the prynces everichoon ;
And eek thre thousand bodyes wære ther
slayn

With fallynge of the greté temple of stoon.
Of Sampson now wol I namooré sayn ; ³²⁸⁰
Beth war by this ensample oold and playn
That no men telle hir conseil til hir wyves
Of swich thyng as they wolde han secree
fayn,

If that it touche hir lymés or hir lyvès.

Of HERCULES, the sovereyn conquer-
our,

Syngen his werkés laude and heigh renoun ;
For in his tyme of strengthe he was the flour.
He slow, and rafte the skyn of the leoun ;
He of Centauros leyde the boost adoun ;
He Arpies slow, the crueel bryddés felle ;
He golden apples rafte of the dragoun ;
He drow out Cerberus, the hound of helle ;

He slow the crueel tyrant Busiris,
And made his hors to frete hym, flessh
and boon ;

He slow the firy serpent venymus ; ³²⁹⁵
Of Acheloys two hornés he brak oon ;
And he slow Cacus in a cave of stoon ;
He slow the geant Antheús the stronge ;
He slow the grisly boor, and that anon ;
And bar the heavene on his nekké longe.

Was never wight sith that this world bigan,
That slow so manye monstres as dide he ;
Thurghout this wyde world his namé ran,

³²⁷⁴. *the*, H⁸ *two*.

³²⁸⁵. *Hercules*. In this and the next stanza
(haucer follows closely Boethius, *De Consola-
tione*, Bk. v. Met. 7, keeping some of the phrases
of his own translation.

³²⁹³. *Busiris*, Busiris, King of Egypt, who
suffered strangers in sacrifice.

³²⁹⁶. *Acheloys*. The river-god turned himself
into a bull to fight Hercules the better.

³²⁹⁶. *brak*, H *raft*.

³²⁹⁷. *Cacus*, who stole the cattle of Hercules.

³²⁹⁸. *Antheús*, Antæus.

What for his strengthe and for his heigh
 bountee,
 And every reawmé wente he for to see.
 He was so stroong that no man myghte
 hym lette;
 At bothe the worldés endés, seith Tro-
 phee,
 In stide of boundés he a pileer sette.

A lemman hadde this noble champioun,
 That highté Dianira, fressh as May; 3310
 And as thise clerkés maken mentioun,
 She hath hym sent a sherté, fressh and gay.
 Allas, thissherte—allas, and weylaway!--
 Envenymed was so subtilly withalle,
 That er that he had wered it half a day,
 It made his flessch al from his bonés falle;

But nathélees somme clerkés hire excusen
 By oon that highté Nessus, that it maked.
 Be as be may, I wol hire noght accusen;
 But on his bak this sherte he wered al
 naked, 3320
 Til that his flessch was for the venym
 blaked;
 And whan he saugh noon oother remedye,
 In hooté coles he hath hymselfen raked;
 For with no venym deignéð hym to dye.

Thus starf this worthy, myghty Hercules.
 Lo! who may truste on Fortune any
 throwe?
 For hym that folweth al this world of
 prees,
 Er he be war, is ofte y-leyd ful lowe.
 Ful wys is he that kan hymselfen knowe!
 Beth war, for whan that Fortune list to
 glose, 3330
 Thanne wayteth she hir man to over-
 throwe
 By swich a wey as he wolde leest suppose.

The myghty trone, the precious tresor,
 The glorious ceptre, and roial magestee
 That hadde the kyng NABUGODONOSOR,

3307. *Trophee*. E and Heng., wiser than any modern commentator, append the note 'Ille vates Chaldeorum Tropheus'!
 3318. *Nessus*, the Centaur whom Hercules slew.

With tonge unnethé may discryvéd bee.
 He twyés wan Jerusalem the citee;
 The vessel of the temple he with hym
 ladde.

At Babiloigné was his sovereyn see, 3339
 In which his glorie and his delit he hadde.

The faireste children of the blood roial
 Of Israel he leet do gelde anoon,
 And makéd ech of hem to been his thral.
 Amongés othere Daniel was oon,
 That was the wiseste child of everychon,
 For he the dremés of the kyng expowned,
 Where-as in Chaldeye clerk ne was ther
 noon,
 That wisté to what fyn his dremés sowned.

This proudé kyng leet maken a statue of
 gold, 3349
 Sixty cubités long and sevene in brede,
 To which ymagé bothé yonge and oold
 Comanded he to loute, and have in drede,
 Or in a fourneys, ful of flambs rede,
 He shal be brent, that woldé noght obeye.
 But never wolde assenté to that dede
 Daniel, ne his yongé felawes tweye.

This kyng of kyngés proud was and elaat;
 He wende that God that sit in magestee
 Ne myghte hym nat bireve of his estaat;
 But sodcynly he loste his dignytee 3360
 And lyk a beest hym seméd for to bee;
 And eet hey as an oxe, and lay theroute
 In reyn; with wildé beestés walkéd hee
 Til certein tymé was y-come aboute;

And lik an eglés fetheres wex his heres;
 His naylès lik a briddés clawés were;
 Til God relesséd hym a certeyn yeres,
 And yaf hym wit, and thanne with many
 a teere

He thankéd God, and ever his lyf in feere
 Was he to doon amys, or moore trespaece;
 And, til that tyme he leyd was on his
 beere, 3371
 He knew that God was ful of myght and
 grace.

3365. *wex*, emend. Skeat for *wax* (E) and *were* (H²) etc. of MSS.

His soné, which that highté BALTHASAR,
That heeld the regne after his fader day,
He by his fader koudé noght be war;
For proud he was of herte and of array,
And eek an ydolastré he was ay.
His hye estaat assuréd hym in pryde;
But Fortune caste hym doun and ther
 he lay,
And sodeynly his regné gan divide. 3380

A feeste he made unto his lordés alle,
Upon a tyme, and bad hem blithé bec;
And thanne his officerés gan he calle,-
'Gooth, bryngeth forth the vessellés,'
 quod he,
'Whiche that my fader in his prosperitee
Out of the temple of Jerusalem birafte,
And to our hye goddés thanké we
Of honour that oure eldrés with us lafte.'

His wyf, his lordés, and his concubynes
Ay dronken, whil hire appetités laste, 3390
Out of thise noble vessels sondry wynes;
And on a wal this kyng his eyen caste,
And saugh an hand, armlees, that wroot
 ful fast;
For feere of which he quook, and sikéd
 soore.

This hand, that Balthasar so soore agaste,
Wroot *Mane, techel, phares*, and na moore.

In al that land magicien was noon
That koude expoundé what this lettré
 mente;

But Daniel expownéd it anon, 3399
And seyde, 'King, God to thy fader sente
Glorie and honour, regné, tresour, rente,
And he was proud, and no-thing God
 ne dradde,
And therefore God greet wreche upon
 hym sente,
And hym birafte the regné that he hadde;

'He was out-cast of mannés compaignye;
With asses was his habitacioun,
And eet hey as a beest in weet and drye,
Til that he knew, by grace and by resoun,

3384. *vesselles*. Only *Corpus* and *Lansdowne*
make this a trisyllable here.

That God of hevene hath domynacioun
Over every regne and every créature; 3410
And thanne hadde God of hym com-
 passioun,
And hym restored his regne and his figúre.

'Eek thou that art his sone art proud also,
And knowest alle thise thyngés verrailly,
And art rebel to God and art his foo;
Thou drank eek of his vessels boldély;
Thy wyf eek, and thy wenchés, synfully
Dronke of the samé vessels sondry wynys,
And heriest false goddés cursedly;
Therefore to thee y-shapenful greet pyne ys.

'This hand was sent from God, that on
 the wal 3421
Wroot, '*Mane, techel, phares*,' trusté
 me,--

Thy regne is doon, thou weyest noght at al,
Dyvyded is thy regne, and it shal be
To Medés and to Persés yeve,' quod he.
And thilké samé nyght this kyng was
 slawe,
And Darius occupieth his degree,
Thogh he therto hadde neither right ne
 lawe.

Lordynges, ensample heer-by may ye
 take, 3429
How that in lordshipe is no sikernesse;

For whan Fortúné wole a man forsake,
She bereth away his regne and his richesse,
And eek his freendés, bothé moore and
 lesse;

For what man that hath freendés thurgh
 Fortúne

Mishape wol maken hem enemys, as I
 gesse;

This proverbe is ful sooth and ful com-
 múne.

CENOBIA, of Palymerie queene,—
As writen Persiens of hir noblesse,—
So worthy was in armés, and so keene,
That no wight passéd hire in hardynesse,
Ne in lynage, ne in oother gentillesse.

3437. *Cenobia*. The account of Zenobia follows
closely, omitting details of battles, Boccaccio's
De Claris Mulieribus, cap. 98.

Of kynges blood of Perce is she descended;
I seye nat that she hadde moost fairnesse,
But of hire shape she myghte nat been
amended.

From hire childhede I fynde that she fledde
Office of wommen, and to wode she went,
And many a wildé hertés blood she shedde
With arwés brode that she to hem sente;
She was so swift that she anon hem hente,
And whan that she was elder she wolde
kille

Leouns, leopardes, and berés al to-rente,
And in hir armés weelde hem at hir wille.

She dorsté wildé beestés dennés seke,
And rennen in the montaignés al the nyght,
And slepen under the bussh; and she
koude eke

Wrastlen, by verray force and verray myght,
With any yong man, were he never so
wight.

Ther myghte no thyng in hir armés stonde.
She kepte hir maydenhod from every
wight;

To no man deigné hire for to be bonde;

But atté laste hir freendés han hire maried
To Onédake, a prynce of that contree;
Al were it so that she hem longé taried.
And ye shul understandé how that he
Hadde swiché fantasies as haddé she;
But nathelees, whan they were knynte feere,
They lyved in joye and in felicitee,
Forech of hem hadde oother lief and decre,

Save o thyng, that she wolde never assente
By no wey that he sholdé by hire lye

But onés, for it was hir pleyn entente
To have a child the world to multiplye;
And also soone as that she myghte espye
That she was nat with childé with that
dede,

Thanne wolde she suffre hym doon his
fantasye

Eft soone, and nat but oonés, out of drede;

And if she were with childe at thilké cast,

3477-80. Chaucer here misunderstands his
original.

Na mooré sholde he pleyen thilké game,
Til fully fourty dayés weren past;
Thanne wolde she onés suffre hym do
the same.

Al were this Onédake wilde or tame
Hegat na moore of hire, for thus she seyde,
It was to wyvés lecherie and shame,
In oother caas, if that men with hem pleyde.

Two sonés by this Onédake hadde she,
The whiche she kepte in vertu and lettrure;
But now unto our talé turné we.

I seye so worshipful a creature,
And wys ther-with, and largé with mesure,
So penyble in the werre, and curteis eke,
Ne mooré labour myghte in werre endure,
Was noon, though al this world men
sholdé seke.

Hir riche array ne myghté nat be told,
As wel in vessel as in hire clothyng.
She was al clad in perree and in gold,
And eek she lafte noght, for noon huntynge,
To have of sondry tongés ful knowyng,
Whan that she leyser hadde; and for to
entende

To lerné bookés was al hire likyng,
How she in vertu myghte hir lyf spende.

And, shortly of this storie for to tete,
So doghty was hir housbonde and eek she,
That they conquéréd manye regnés grete
In the Orient, with many a faire citee
Apertenaut unto the magestee
Of Romé, and with strong hond held
hem faste,

Nenever myghte hir foomen doon hem flee,
Ay, whil that Onédakés dayés laste.

Hir batailles, whoso list hem for to rede,—
Agayn Sapor the kyng and othere mo,
And how that al this proces fil in dede,
Why she conquered, and what tittle had
therto,

And after of hir meschief and hire wo,
How that she was bisegé and y-take,—

3487. *tale*, H *purpos*.

3492. H *Was nowher noon, in al this world
to seeke*.

3501. *storie*, E *proces*.

Lat hym unto my maister Petrak go,
That writ ynough of this, I undertake.

Whan Onédake was deed she myghtily
Theregnés heeld, and with hire propré hond
Agayn hir foos she faught so cruelly
That ther nas kyng, ne prynce, in al that
lond 3520

That he nas glad if he that gracé fond,
That she ne wolde upon his lond werreye.
With hire they maden alliance by bond
To been in pees, and lete hire ride and
pleye.

The emperour of Romé, Claudius,
Ne hym bifore, the Romayn Galien,
Ne dorsté never been so corageous
Ne noon Ermyrn, ne noon Egipcien,
Ne Surrien, ne noon Arabyen,
Withinne the feelde that dorsté with hire
fighte 3530

Lest that she wolde hem with hir handés
slen,
Or with hir meignec putten hem to flighte.

In kyngés habit wente hir sonés two,
As heirés of hir fadrés regnés alle,
And Hermannó and Thymialao
Hir namés were, as Persiens hem calle :
But ay Fortune hath 'in hire hony galle :
This myghty queené may no while endure.
Fortune out of hir regné made hire falle
To wrecchednesse and to mysáventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governaunce
Of Romé cam into his handés tweye,
He shoopé upon this queene to doon
vengeaunce ;

And with his legions he took his weye
Toward Cenobie, and, shortly for to seye,
He made hire flec and atté last hire hente,
And fettred hire, and eek hire children
tweye,

And wan the land, and hoom to Rome
he wente.

3515. *Petrak*, i.e. Boccaccio, who, however, is never mentioned by Chaucer, for what reason is not clear.

3519. *so cruelly*, H *ful trewely*, Corp.³ *trewely*.

3528. *Ermyrn*, Armenian.

Amongés othere thyngés that he wan
Hir chaar, that was with gold wrought and
perree, 3550

This grété Romayn, this Aurelian,
Hath with hym lad, for that men sholde
it see.

Biforen his triúmphé walketh shee
With gílté cheynés on hire nekke hangyng.
Corónéd was she after hir degree,
And ful of perree chargéd hire clothynge.

Allas, Fortuné ! she that whilom was
Dredeful to kyngés and to emperoures,
Now gaureth al the peple on hire, allás !
And she that helméd was in starké
stoures, 3560

And wan by forcé townés stronge, and
tours,

Shal on hir heed nów were a vitremyte ;
And she that bar the ceptre ful of floures
Shal bere a distaf, hire costés for to quyte.

O noble, o worthy PETRO, glorie of
Spayne,
Whom Fortune heeld so hye in magestee,
Wel oghten men thy pitous deeth com-
playne !

Out of thy land thy brother made thee flee,
And after, at a seege, by subtiltee, 3569
Thou were bitraysed and lad unto his tente,
Where-as he with his owene hand slow
thee,

Succedyngé in thy regne and in thy rente.

The feelde of snow with thegle of blak
therinne

Caught with the lymérod coloured as the
gleede,

He brew this cursednesse and al this synne.

3565. *Petro*, Pedro the Cruel, killed by his brother Henry in 1369. In F, Heng. and Camb. this and the three other modern instances come at the end after *Croesus*, but wrongly as the Host's talk shows.

3568. H⁴ read *Thy bastard brother made the to fle*.

3572. *regne*, H *lond*.

3573. Du Guesclin's arms were a black eagle on a silver shield, with a bend gules (the lymérod, or lime twig, coloured like a red coal). Wickednest is Sir Oliver de Mauny (mal-ni) of Brittany. The two trapped Pedro to the fatal meeting. The epithet Genylon refers to the Breton traitor who betrayed Roland.

The 'wikked-nest' was werker of this nede,
 Noght Charles-Olyvver, that took ay heede
 Of trouthe and honour, but of Armorique
 Genylon-Olyver, corrupt for meede, 3579
 Broghte this worthy kyng in swiche a brike.

O worthy PETRO, kyng of Cipre also,
 That Alisandre wan by heigh maistrie,
 Ful many a hethen wroghtestow ful wo,
 Of which thyne owenē ligēs hadde envie,
 And for no thyng but for thy chivalric
 They in thy bed han slayn thee by the
 morwe.
 Thus kan Fortūne hir wheel governē and
 gye,
 And out of joyē bryngē men to sorwe.

Of Melan, gretē BARNABO VISCONTE,
 God of delit, and scourge of Lumbardye,
 Why sholde I nat thyn infortune acounte,
 Sith in estaat thow cloumbē were so hye?
 Thy brother sone, that was thy double
 allye,
 For he thy nevew was, and sone-in-lawe,
 Withinne his prisoun madē thee to dye,—
 But why, ne how, noot I that thou were
 slawe.

Of the erl HUGELYN OF PYZÉ the
 langour
 Ther may no tongē tellē for pitee;
 But litel out of Pizē stant a tour, 3599
 In whichē tour in prisoun put was he,
 And with hym been his litel children thre;
 The eldeste scarsly fyf yeer was of age.
 Allas, Fortūne! it was greet crueltee
 Swiche briddēs for to putte in swiche a
 cage!

Dampnēd was he to dyen in that prisoun,
 For Roger, which that bisshope was of Pize,

3581. *Petro, kyng of Cipre*, Pierre de Lusignan, assassinated 1369.

3582. *Alisandre wan*, in 1365.

3589. *Barnabo*, Barnabo Visconti, deposed by his nephew, died in prison 1385.

3597. *Hugelyn of Pyze*, Ugolino of Pisa, starved to death in 1289. See Dante, *Inferno*, xxxiii., from which Chaucer has borrowed.

3601. *thre*, Dante says four.

3602. *scarsly fyf yeer*, a touch added by Chaucer.

3606. *Roger*, Ruggieri degli Ubaldini.

Hadde on hym maad a fals suggestioun
 Thurgh which the peplē gan upon hym rise
 And putten hym to prisoun, in swich wise
 As ye han herd, and mete and drynke he
 hadde 3610
 So smal, that wel unnethē it may suffise,
 And therwithal it was ful poure and badde.

And on a day bifil that in that hour
 Whan that his metē wont was to be broght,
 The gayler shette the dorēs of the tour.
 He herde it wel, but he ne spak right
 noght,
 And in his herte anon ther fil a thoght
 That they for hunger woldē doon hym
 dyen.

'Allas!' quod he, 'allas, that I was
 wroght!' 3619
 Therwith the teeris fillen from his eyen.

His yongē sone, that thre yeer was of age,
 Unto hym seyde, 'Fader, why do ye wepe?
 Whanne wol the gayler bryngen oure
 potage;
 Is ther no morsel breed that ye do kepe?
 I am so hungry that I may nat slepe;
 Now woldē God that I myghte slepen
 evere!
 Thanne sholde nat hunger in my wombē
 crepe;
 Ther is no thyng, but breed, that me were
 levere.'

Thus day by day this child bigan to crye,
 Til in his fadrēs barn adoun it lay, 3630
 And seyde, 'Farewel, fader, I moot dye!'
 And kiste his fader, and dyde the samē
 day;
 And whan the woful fader deed it say,
 For wo his armēs two he gan to byte,
 And seyde, 'Allas, Fortūne! and weyl-
 away!
 Thy falsē wheel my wo al may I wyte!'

His children wende that it for hunger was
 That he his armēs gnaw, and nat for wo,
 And seyde, 'Fader, do nat so, allas!
 But rather ete the flessch upon us two;
 Oure flessch thou yaf us, take oure flessch
 us fro, 3641

And ete ynogh,'—right thus they to
hym seyde,
And after that, withinne a day or two,
They leyde hem in his lappe adoun and
deyde.

Hymself, despeired, cek for hunger starf;
Thus ended is this myghty erl of Pize;
From heigh estaat Fortune away hym carf.
Of this tragédie it oghte ynough suffise.
Whoso wol here it in a lenger wise,
Redeth the greté poete of Ytaille 3650
That highte Dant, for he kan al devyse
Fro point to point,—nat o word wol he
faile.

Although that NERO were as vicious
As any feend that lith in helle adoun,
Yet he, as telleth us Swetonius,
This wyde world hadde in subjeccioun
Bothe east and west, north and septem-
trion;
Of rubies, saphires, and of peerlès white,
Were alle hise clothés brouded up and
doon;
For he in gemmés greetly gan delite. 3660

Moore delicaat, moore pompous of array,
Moore proud, was never emperour than he;
That ilké clooth that he hadde wored oday,
After that tyme he nolde it never see.
Nettës of gold threed hadde he greet plentee
To fische in Tybré, whan hym listé pleye.
His lustés were al lawe in his decree,
For Fortune, as his freend, hym wolde
obeye.

He Romé brende for his delicacie;
The senatours he slow upon a day, 3670
To heere how men wolde wepe and crie;
And slow his brother, and by his suster lay.
His mooder made he in pitous array,
For he hire wombé slitté, to biholde
Where he conceyved was; so weilaway!
That he so litel of his mooder tolde.

3654. *in helle, H8 ful love.*

3655. *Swetonius.* Chaucer is more indebted to the *Roman de la Rose* and to Boethius, *De Cons. lib. 2, met. 6.*

3657. *north,* Chaucer's slip for *south*; Corp. 2 m.

No teere out of his eyen for that sighte
Ne cam, but seyde, 'A fair womman
was she!'

Greet wonder is how that he koude or
myghte

Be domésman of hire dede beautee; 3680
The wyn to bryngen hym comanded he,
And drank anon,—noon oother wo he
made.

Whan myght is joynéd unto crueltee,
Allas, to depé wol the venym wade!

In yowthe a maister hadde this emper-
our,

To teche hym letterure and curteisye,—
For of moralitee he was the flour,
As in his tymé, but if bookès lye;
And whil this maister hadde of hym
maistrye, 3689
He makéd hym so konnyng and so sowple,
That longé tyme it was er tirannye,
Or any vicé, dorste on hym uncowple.

This Seneca, of which that I devyse,
By-cause that Nero hadde of hym swich
drede,

For he fro vices wolde hym ay chastise
Discreetly, as by word, and nat by dede;
'Sire,' wolde he seyn, 'an emperour
moot nede

Be vertuous and haté tirannye';
For which he in a bath made hym to blede
On bothe his armés, til he mosté dye. 3700

This Nero hadde cek of acustumaunce
In youthe agayns his maister for to ryse,
Which afterward hym thoughte a greet
grevaunce;

Therefore he made hym dyen in this wise;
But nathelees this Seneca the wise
Chees in a bath to dye in this manere
Rather than han another tormentise;
And thus hath Nero slayn his maister deere.

Now fil it so that Fortune liste no lenger
The hye pryde of Nero to cherice, 3710
For though he weré strong, yet was she
strenger;

3680. Taken verbatim from Chaucer's version of Boethius.

Shethoughté thus: 'By God, I am to nyce,
To sette a man that is fulfild of vice
In heigh degree, and emperour hym calle.
By God! out of his sete I wol hym trice;
Whan he leest weneth sonest shal he falle!'

The peplé roos upon hym on a nyght
For his defaute, and whan he it espied,
Out of his dores anon he hath hym dight
Allone, and, ther he wende han benallied,
He knokked faste, and ay the moore he
cried 3721
The fastere shetté they the dorés alle;
Tho wiste he weel he hadde hymself
mysgyed,
And wente his wey, no lenger dorste he
calle.

The peplé cride and rombled up and doun,
That with hiserys herde he how they seyde,
'Where is this falsé tiraunt, this Neroun?'
For fere almoost out of his wit he breyde,
And to his goddés pitously he preyde
For socour, but it myghté nat bityde.
For drede of this, hym thoughté that he
deyde, 3731
And ran into a garden hym to hyde;

And in this gardyn foond he cherlès tweye
That seten by a fyr, greet and reed;
And to thise cherlès two he gan to preye
To sleen hym, and to girden of his heed,
That to his body, whan that he were deed,
Were no despit y-doon for his defame.
Hymself he slow, he koude no better reed,
Of which Fortúné lough, and hadde a
game. 3740

Was never capitayn under a kyng
That regnès mo putte in subjeccioun,
Ne strengier was in feeld of allé thyng,
As in his tyme, ne gretter of renoun,
Nemoore pompous in heigh presumpcioun,
Than OLOFERNE, which that Fortune ay
kiste

So likerously, and ladde hym up and doun,
Till that his heed was of, er that he wiste.

3723. E and Heng. have the same line as in
3731 in place of this.

3746. *Oloferne*, *Holofernes*.

Nat oonly that this world hadde hym in awe
For lesynge of richesse or libertee, 3750
But he made every man reneyen his lawe.
'Nabugodonosor was god,' seyde hee,
'Noon oother god[ne]sholde adoured bee.'
Agayns his heeste no wight dorst trespase
Save in Bethulia, a strong citee
Where Eliachim a preest was of that place.

But taak kepe of the deeth of Oloferne:
Amydde his hoost he dronké lay a nyght,
Withinne his tenté, large as is a berne,
And yet, foral his pompe and al his myght,
Judith, a womman, as he lay upright 3761
Slepyng, his heed of smoot, and from
his tente
Ful pryvély she stal from every wight,
And with his heed unto hir toun she wente.

What nedeth it of kyng ANTHIOCHUS
To telle his hyé roial magestee,
His hyé pride, his werkés venymus?
For swich another was ther noon as he.
Redé which that he was in Machabee,
And rede the proudé wordés that he seyde,
And why he fil fro heigh prosperitee,
And in an hill how wrecchedly he deyde.

Fortune hym hadde enhauncéd so in pride
That verrailly he wende he myghte attayne
Unto the sterrés upon every syde;
And in balancé weyen ech montayne;
And alle the floodés of the see restrayne;
And Goddés peplé hadde he moost in hate;
Hem wolde he sleen in torment and in
payne,
Wenyng that God ne myghte his pride
abate. 3780

And for that Nichanore and Thymothee,
Of Jewés weren venquysshed myghtily,
Unto the Jewés swich an hate hadde he
That he bad greithen his chaar ful hastily,
And swoor, and seyde ful despitously
Unto Jerusalem he wolde eftsoone,
To wreke his ire on it ful cruelly;
But of his purpos he was let ful soone.

3749. *hym in*, H⁴ of *him*.

3752. *Nabugodonosor*, *Nebuchadnezzar*.

3752. *god*, H⁴ *lord*.

3753. *adoured*, H⁴ *honoured*.

3769, 70. *Rede*, H⁴ *Redeth*.

3769. *Machabee*, Bk. ii. chap. 9.

God for his manace hym so soorè smoot
 With invisible wounde, ay incuráble, 3790
 That in his guttès carf it so and boot,
 Thát his peynés weren importable ;
 And certainly the wreche was resonable,
 For many a mannès guttes dide he peyne ;
 But from his purpos cursèd and dampnable
 For all his smert he wolde hym nat
 restreynè ;

But bad anon apparailen his hoost,—
 And, sodeynly, er he was of it war,
 God daunted al his pride and all his boost ;
 For he so soorè fil out of his char, 3800
 That it his lemés and his skyn to-tar,
 So that he neyther myghtè go ne ryde,
 But in a chayer men aboute hym bar
 Al for-brusèd, bothè bak and sydc.

The wreche of God hym smoot so cruelly,
 That thurgh his body wikked wormés
 crepte,

And therewithal he stank so horribly
 That noon of al his meynee that hym kepte,
 Wheither so he awook or ellis slepte, 3809
 Ne myghtè noght for stynk of hym endure,
 In this meschief he wayled and eek wepte,
 And knew God lord of every créature.

To all his hoost and to hym self also
 Ful wlatom was the stynk of his careyne ;
 No man ne myghte hym berè to ne fro ;
 And in this stynk and this horrible peyne,
 He starf ful wrecchedly in a monteyne.
 Thus hath this robbour and this homicide,
 That many a man madè to wepe and
 pleyne, 3819
 Swich gerdoun as bilongeth unto pryde.

The storie of ALISAUNDRE is so com-
 mune,
 That every wight that hath discrecioun
 Hath herd somewhat or al of his fortune.
 This wydè world, as in conclusioun,
 He wan by strengthe, or for his hye renoun
 They weren glad for pees unto hym sende.
 The pride of man and beest he leyde
 adoun,
 Wher so he cam, unto the worldès ende.

K

Comparisoun myghte never yet been
 maked

Bitwixe hym and another conquerour ;
 For al this world for drede of hym hath
 quaked. 3837

He was of knighthod and of fredom flour ;
 Fortune hym made the heir of hire honour ;
 Save wyn and wommen no thyng mighte
 aswage

His hye entente in armés and labour,
 So was he ful of leonyn corage.

What preys were it to hym though I yow
 tolde

Of Dárius, and an hundred thousand mo,
 Of kyngès, princes, erlès, dukés bolde,
 Whiche he conquered and broghte hem
 into wo ? 3840

I seye, as fer as man may ryde or go,
 The world was his,—what sholde I moore
 devyse ?

For though I writ or tolde yow evermo
 Of his knyghthode, it myghtè nat suffise.

Twelf yeer he regnèd, as seith Machabee.
 Philipps sone of Macidoyn he was,
 That first was kyng in Grecè the contree.

O worthy, gentil Alisandre, alas !
 That ever sholdè fallen swich a cas !
 Emposyoned of thyn owenè folk thou
 weere ; 3850

Thy ȝys Fortune hath turned into aas,
 And yet for thee ne weep she never a
 teere !

Who shal me yeven teeris to compleyne
 The deeth of gentillesse and of franchise,
 That al the world welded in his demeyne ?
 And yet hym thoughte it myghtè nat
 suffise,

So ful was his corage of heigh emprise.
 Allas ! who shal me helpè to endite
 Falsè Fortune, and poyson to despise,
 The whichè two of al this wo I yte ?

By wisdom, manhede, and by greet
 labour 3861
 From humble bed to roial magestee
 Up roos he, JULIUS the conquerour,

3862. *humble bed*, Corp.³ *humblehede*.

That wan al thoccident, by land and see,
By strengthe of hand, or elles by tretee,
And unto Romé made hem tributarie;
And sitthe of Rome the emperour was he
Til that Fortuné weex his adversarie.

O myghty Cesar! that in Thessalie
Agayn Pompéus, fader thyn in lawe, ³⁸⁷⁰
That of the orient hadde all the chivalrie
As fer as that the day bigynneth dawe,
Thou thurgh thy knyghthod hast hem
take and slawe,
Save fewe folk that with Pompéus fledde,
Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in
awe,—
Thanké Fortuné, that so wel thee spedde!

But now a litel while I wol biwaille
This Pompéus, this noble governour
Of Romé, which that fleigh at this
bataille. ³⁸⁷⁹
I seye, oon of his men, a fals traitour,
His heed of smoot, to wynnen hym favour
Of Julius, and hym the heed he broghte.
Allas, Pompeye, of thorient conquerour,
That Fortune unto swich a fyn thee
broghte!

To Rome agayn repaireth Julius
With his triumphe, lauriat ful hyc;
But on a tyme Brutus and Cassius,
That ever hadde of his hyc estaat envye,
Ful prively had maad conspiracye
Agayns this Julius in subtil wise, ³⁸⁹⁰
And caste the place in which he sholdé dye
With boydékyns, as I shal yow devyse.

This Julius to the Capitolie wente
Upon a day, as he was wont to goon,
And in the Capitolie anon hym hente
This falsé Brutus, and his othere foon,
And stikéd hym with boydékyns anon
With many a wounde, and thus they lete
hym lye;
But never gronte he at no strook but oon,
Or elles at two, but if his storie lye. ³⁹⁰⁰

So manly was this Julius of herte,
And so wel lovede estaatly honestee,

3866. *tributarie*, H *contributarie*.

That though his deedly woundés sooré
smerte,

His mantel over his hypés casteth he
For no man sholdé seen his privetee;
And as he lay of diyng in a trauce,
And wisté verrailly that deed was hee,
Of honestee yet hadde he remembraunce.

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende,
And to Swetoun, and to Valerius also,
That of this storie written ord and ende,
How that to this grete conquerours two
Fortuné was first freend and sitthe foo.
No man ne truste upon hire favour longe,
But have hire in awayt for ever-moo;
Witnesse on alle thise conquerours
stronge.

This riché CRESUS, whilom kyng of
Lyde,
Of whiché Cresus Cirus soore hym dradde,
Yet was he caught amyddés al his pryde
And to be brent men to the fyr hym ladde;
But swich a reyn doun fro the welkne
shadde, ³⁹²¹
That slow the fyr and made hym to escape;
But to be war, no gracé yet he hadde,
Til Fortune on the galwés made hym gape.

Whanne he escapéd was he kan nat stente
For to bigynne a newé werre agayn.
He wendé wel, for that Fortune hym sente
Swich hape that he escapéd thurgh the rayn,
That of his foom he myghté nat be slayn;
And eek a swevene upon a nyght he mette,
Of which he was so proud, and eek so fayn,
That in vengeance he al his herté sette.

Upon a tree he was, as that hym thoughte,
Ther Juppiter hym wesshe, bothe bak
and syde,
And Phebus eek a fair towaille hym
broughte
To dryen hym with, and therfore wex
his pryde;

^{3910.} *Valerius*, i.e. Valerius Maximus.
^{3911.} *ord.*, beginning; Dr. Hickes' correction
for the word of the MSS.

^{3920.} *And to be brent*, etc., cp. Boethius, *De Consolatione*, Bk. ii. prose 2; H reads: *And to the fuyr to brenne him men him ladde.*

^{3921.} *welkne*, H *heven*.

And to his doghter, that stood hym bisyde,
Which that he knew in heigh science
habounde,

He bad hire telle hym what it signyfyde,
And she his dreem bigan right thus ex-
pounde :

3940

'The tree,' quod she, 'the galwès is to
meene ;

And Juppiter bitokneth snow and reyn,
And Phebus with his towaillè so clene,
Tho been the sonnè-bemès for to seyn ;
Thou shalt anhangèd be, fader, certeyn,—
Reyn shal thee wasshe and sonnè shal
thee drye' ;

Thus warnèd she hym ful plat and ful
pleyn,

Hisdoghter which that called was Phanye.

An-hanged was Cresus, the proudè kyng ;
His roial tronè myghte hym nat availle.

Tragédie is noon oother maner thyng ;
Ne kan in syngyng criè ne biwaille
But for that Fortune alwey wole assaille
With unwar strook the regnès that been
proude ;

For whan men trusteth hire, thanne wol
she faille,

And covere hire brighte facè with a
clowde—

*The Knight and the Host complain of
this Tale*

'Hoo !' quod the Knyght, 'good sire,
namoore of this !

That ye han seyð is right ynough, y-wis,
And muchel moore ; for litel hevynesse
Is right ynough to muchè folk, I gesse.
I seye for me it is a greet disese, 3961
Where as men han been in greet welthe
and ese,

To heeren of hire sodeyn fal, alas !
And the contrarie is joye and greet solas,
As whan a man hath ben in poure estaat,
And clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
And there abideth in prosperitee ;

3944. *sonne-bemes*, H⁶ *sonne-stremes*.

3954. *With unwar strook*. The phrase is from Boethius.

Swich thyng is gladsom, as it thynketh
me,

And of swich thyng were goodly for to
telle.'

'Ye,' quod oure Hoost, 'by Seintè
Poulès belle !

3970

Ye seye right sooth ; this Monk he
clappeth lowde ;

He spak how "Fortune covered with a
clowde"

I noot never what, and als of a "tragédie"
Right now ye herde, and, *pardee*, no
remédie

It is for to biwailè, ne compleyne

That that is doon ; and als, it is a payne,
As ye han seyð, to heere of hevynesse.

Sire Monk, namoore of this, so God yow
blesse !

Youre tale anoyeth all this compaignye ;
Swich talkyng is nat worth a boterflye,
For therinne is ther no desport ne game.
Wherefore, sire Monk, or daun Piers by
youre name,

I pray yow hertely, telle us somewhat elles,
For sikerly nere clynkyng of youre belles,
That on youre bridel hange on every
syde,

By hevене kyng, that for us allè dyde !

I sholde er this han fallen down for sleepe,
Althogh the slough had never been so
deepe ;

Thanne hadde youre tale al be toold in
veyn,

3989

For certeinly, as that thise clerkès seyn,
Where as a man may have noon audience,
Noght helpeth it to tellen his sentence ;
And wel I woot the substance is in
me,

If any thyng shal wel reported be.

Sir, sey somewhat of huntynge, I yow preye.'

'Nay !' quod this Monk, 'I have no
lust to pleye ;

Now lat another telle, as I have toold.'

Thanne spak oure Hoost with rudè
speche and boold,

And seyde unto the Nonnès Preest anon,
'Com neer, thou preest, com hyder,
thou sir John.

4000

3972. *covered*, H *was clipped*.

3984. *clynkyng*, H *gingling*.

Telle us swich thyng as may oure hertés
glade ;

Be blithé, though thou ryde upon a jade.
What though thyn hors be bothé foule
and lene ?

If he wol serve thee, rekké nat a bene ;
Looke that thyn herte be murie evermo.'

'Yis, sir,' quod he, 'yis, Hoost, so
moot I go,

But I be myrie, y-wis I wol be blamed.'
And right anon his tale he hath attamed,
And thus he seyde unto us everichon,
This sweeté preest, this goodly man, sir
John. 4010

NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

*Heere bigynneeth The Nonnes Preestes
Tale of the Cok and Hen,—Chau-
tecleer and Pertelote*

A poure wydwe, somdel stape in age,
Was whilom dwellyng in a narwe cotage
Beside a grevé, stondyng in a dale.
This wydwe, of which I tellé yow my
tale,

Syn thilké day that she was last a wyf,
In pacience ladde a ful symple lyf,
For litel was hir catel and hir rente.
By housbondrie of swich as God hire sente
She foond hirself, and eek hire doghtren
two. 4019

Thre largé sowés hadde she, and namo ;
Three keen and eek a sheep that highté
Malle.

Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hire halle,
In which she eet ful many a skendremeel ;
Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.
No deyntee morsel passéd thurgh hir
throte,

Hir diete was accordant to hir cote ;
Repleccioun ne made hire never sik,
Attempreé diete was al hir phisik,
And exercise, and hertés suffisaunce.
The gauté lette hire no-tyng for to
daunce, 4030

Napoplexié shenté nat hir heed ;

The Nonnes Preestes Tale. A fable of Marie
de France, *Dou Coc et dou Werpil*, contains in
38 lines the germ of this tale.

No wyn ne drank she, neither whit ne
reed ;

Hir bord was servéd moost with whit
and blak,—

Milk and broun breed,—in which she
foond no lak ;

Seynd bacoun and somtyme an ey or tweye,
For she was, as it were, a maner deye.

A yeerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute
With stikkés, and a dryé dych withoute,
In which she hadde a cok, heet Chaun-
técleer. 4039

In al the land of crowyng nas his peer.
His voys was murier than the murie orgon
On messé dayes that in the chirché gon ;
Wel sikerer was his crowyng in his logge
Than is a klokke, or an abbey orlogge.

By nature knew he eche ascencioun
Of the equynoxial in thilké toun ;
For whan degreés fiftene weren ascended,
Thanne crew he that it myghte nat been
amended.

His coomb was redder than the fyn coral,
And batailled as it were a castel wal ; 4050
His byle was blak, and as the jeet it shoon ;
Lyk asure were his leggés and his toon ;
His naylés whiter than the lylle flour,
And lyk the burnéd gold was his colour.

This gentil cok hadde in his gover-
naunce

Sevene hennés for to doon al his plesaunce,
Whiche were his sustrés and his para-
mours,

And wonder lyk to hym, as of colours ;
Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir throte
Was clepéd faire damoysele Pertelote. 4060
Curteys she was, discreet and debonaire,
And compaignable, and bar hyrself so
faire

Syn thilké day that she was seven nyght
oold,

That trewely she hath the herte in hoold
Of Chauntecleer, loken in every lith ;
He loved hire so that wel was hym ther-
with ;

But swiche a joye was it to here hem
syngé,

Whan that the brighté sonne bigan to
sprynge,

4045. *knew he, E² he crew ; rest he knew.*

In sweete accord, 'My lief is faren in
londe'; 4069

For thilkè tyme, as I have understonde,
Beestès and briddès koudè speke and
syngè.

And so bifel, that in the dawényngè,
As Chauntécleer among his wyvès alle
Sat on his perchè, that was in the halle,
And next hym sat this fairè Pertelote,
This Chauntécleer gangronen in his throte,
As man that in his dreem is drecchéd
soore.

And whan that Pertelote thus herde hym
roore,

She was agast, and seyde, 'O hertè deere!
What eyleth yow, to grone in this manère?
Ye been a verray sleper; fy, for shame!'

And he answerde and seyde thus:
'Madame,

I pray yow that ye take it nat agrief;
By God, me mette I was in swich meschief
Right now, that yet myn herte is soore
afright.

Now God,' quod he, 'my swevene recche
aright,

And kepe my body out of foul prisoun!
Me mette how that I roméd up and doun
Withinne our yeerl, wheer as I saugh a
beest

Was lyk an hound, and wolde han maad
areest 4090

Upon my body, and han had me deed.
His colour was bitwixè yelow and reed,
And tippéd was his tayl, and bothe his
eeris,

With blak, unlyk the remenant of his
heeris;

His snowtè smal, with glowyngè eyen
tweye.

Yet of his look for feere almoost I deye:
This causéd me my gronyng doutélees.'

'Avoy!' quod she, 'fy on yow, hertè-
lees!

Allas!' quod she, 'for by that God above!
Now han ye lost myn herte and al my love.
I kan nat love a coward, by my feith!
For certès, what so any womman seith,
We alle desiren, if it myghtè bee,

⁴⁰⁸⁹. *a beest*. The description is exactly that
of a 'col-fox' (l. 4405).

To han housbóndès hardy, wise, and free,
And secree, and no nygard, ne no fool,
Ne hym that is agast of every tool,
Ne noon avantour, by that God above!
How dorste ye seyn, for shame, unto
youre love

That any thyng myghte makè yow aferd?
Have ye no mannès herte, and han a berd?

'Allas! and konne ye been agast of
swevenys? 4117

No thyng, God woot, but vanitee in
swevene is.

Swevenes engendren of replecciouns,
And ofte of fume, and of complecciouns,
Whan humours been to habundant in a
wight.

'Certès this dreem, which ye han
met to-nyght,

Cometh of the greet superfluytee
Of yourè redè colera, *parides*,

Which causeth folk to dreden in hir dremes
Of arwès, and of fyre with redè lemes, ⁴¹²⁰

Of redè beestès, that they wol hem byte,
Of contekes and of whelpès, grete and lyte;
Right as the humour of malencolie

Causeth ful many a man in sleepe to crie,
For feere of blakè beres, or bolès blake,
Or ellès blakè develes wole hem take.

Of othere humours koude I telle also
That werken many a man in sleepe ful wo;

But I wol passe as lightly as I kan.
Lo, Catoun, which that was so wys a man,

Seyde he nat thus, "Ne do no fors of
dremes"?

'Now, sire,' quod she, 'whan we flee
fro the bemes,

For Goddès love, as taak som laxatyf.
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,

I conseille yow the beste, I wol nat lye,
That bothe of colere and of malencolye

Ye purgè yow, and, for ye shal nat tarie,
Though in this toun is noon apothecarie,

I shal myself to herbès techen yow
That shul been for youre hele, and for

youre prow; 4140
And in oure yeerl tho herbès shal I fynde,

The whiche han of hire propretee by kynde

⁴¹²⁰. *lemes*, gleams; *H beemes*.

⁴¹²¹. *redè*, *l. grett*.

⁴¹³⁰. *Catoun*, *Dist.* ii. 32: 'somnia ne cures.'

To purgè yow, bynethe and eek above.
 Forget nat this, for Goddès owenè love !
 Ye been ful coleryk of compleccioun.
 Warè the sonne in his ascencioun
 Ne fynde yow nat repleet of humours
 hoote ;

And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote
 That ye shul have a fevere terciane,
 Or an agu, that may be yourè bane. 4150
 A day or two ye shul have digestyves
 Of wormès, er ye take youre laxatyves
 Of lawriol, centaure and fumetere,
 Or elles of ellèbor that groweth there,
 Of katapuce or of gaitrys beryis,
 Of herbe yve, growyng in oure yeerd,
 ther mery is ;

Pekke hem up right as they growe and
 ete hem yn ;
 Be myrie, housbonde, for youre fader kyn !
 Dredeth no dreem ; I kan sey yow
 namoore.'

'Madame,' quod he, '*graunt mercy* of
 youre loore, 4160

But nathèeles, as touchyng daun Catoun,
 That hath of wysdom swich a greet renoun,
 Though that he bad no dremès for to
 drede,

By God, men may in oldè bookès rede
 Of many a man, moore of auctorite
 Than ever Caton was, so moot I thee !
 That al the revers seyn of his sentence,
 And han wel founden by experience
 That dremès been significaciouns
 As wel of joye as tribulaciouns, 4170
 That folk enduren in this lif present.
 Ther nedeth make of this noon argument,
 The verray preevè sheweth it in dede.

'Oon of the gretteste auctours that
 men rede

Seith thus, that whilom two felawès wente
 On pilgrimage, in a ful good entente,
 And happed so they coomen in a toun,
 Wher as ther was swich congregacioun
 Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergeage,
 That they ne founde as muche as o cotage
 In which they bothè myghtè loggèd bee ;
 Wherefore they mosten of necessitee,

4174. *auctours*. Cicero, *De Divin.* i. 27, relates
 both this and the next story.

4181. H reads: *In which that thay might both
 i-logged be.*

As for that nyght, departen compaignye ;
 And ech of hem gooth to his hostelrye,
 And took his loggyng as it woldè falle.
 That oon of hem was loggèd in a stalle,
 Fer in a yeerd, with oxen of the plough ;
 That oother man was loggèd wel ynough,
 As was his áventure, or his fortune, 4189
 That us governeth alle as in commune.

'And so bifel that longe er it were day,
 This man mette in his bed, ther as he lay,
 How that his felawe gan upon hym calle,
 And seyde, "Allas ! for in an oxes stalle
 This nyght I shal be mordred ther I lye ;
 Now helpe me, deerè brother, or I dye ;
 In allè hastè com to me !" he seyde.

'This man out of his sleepe for feere
 abrayde ;

But whan that he was wakened of his
 sleepe, 4199

He turnèd hym and took of this no keepe ;
 I hym thoughte his dreem nas but a vanitee.
 Thus twis in his slepyng dremed hee,
 And attè thriddè tyme yet his felawe
 Cam, as hym thoughte, and seide, "I am
 now slawe !

Bihoold my bloody woundès, depe and
 wyde ;

Arys up erly in the morwè tyde,
 And at the west gate of the toun," quod he,
 "A cartè ful of donge ther shaltow se,
 In which my body is hid ful privèly ;
 Do thiikè carte arresten boldèly ; 4210

Mygold causèd my mordrè, sooth tosayn."
 And tolde hym every point how he was
 slayn,

With a ful pitous facè, pale of hewe ;
 And trustè wel, his dreem he foond ful
 trewe ;

For on the morwe, as soone as it was day,
 To his felawès in he took the way,
 And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,
 After his felawe he bigan to calle.

'The hostiler answerdè hym anon 4219
 And seyde, "Sire, your felawe is agon ;
 As soone as day he wente out of the toun."

'This man gan fallen in suspecioun,---
 Remembrynge on his dremès, that he
 mette,—

And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he
 llette,

Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond
 A dong carte, as it were to dongé lond,
 That was arrayed in that samé wise
 As ye han herd the dedé man devyse;
 And with an hardy herte he gan to crye
 Vengeance and justice of this felonye. 4230
 "My felawe mordred is this samé nyght,
 And in this carte he lith gapyng upright.
 I crye out on the ministres," quod he,
 "That sholden kepe and reulen this citee;
 Harrow! alas! heere lith my felawe
 slayn!"

What sholde I moore unto this talé sayn?
 The peple out sterte and caste the cart to
 grounde,

And in the myddel of the dong they
 founde

The dedé man, that mordred was al newe.

'O blisful God, that art so just and
 trewe! 4240

Lo, how that thou biwreyest mordre alway!

Mordré wol out, that se we day by day;

Mordre is so wlatson, and abhomynable

To God, that is so just and resonable,

That he ne wol nat suffre it heléd be,

Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or thre;

Mordré wol out, this my conclusioun.

And right anon, ministres of that toun

Han hent the carter, and so soore hym
 pyned, 4249

And eek the hostiler so soore engyned,

That they biknewe hire wikkednesse anon,

And were an-hanged by the nekké bon.

'Heere may men seen that dremés
 been to drede;

And certès, in the samé book I rede,

Right in the nexté chapitre after this,—

I gabbe nat, so have I joye or blis,—

Two men that wolde han passéd over
 see,

For certeyn cause, into a fer contree,

If that the wynd ne haddé been contrarie,

That made hem in a citee for to tarie 4260

That stood ful myrie upon an haven syde;

But on a day, agayn the even-tyde,

The wynd gan chaunge, and blew right
 as hem leste.

Jolif and glad they wente unto hir reste,

And casten hem ful erly for to saille.

4242. *that se we, etc., H certes it is no nay.*

'But to that o man fil a greet mer-
 vaille;

That oon of hem in slepyng as he lay,
 Hym mette a wonder drem, agayn the
 day:

Him thoughte a man stood by his beddés
 syde 4269

And hym comanded that he sholde abyde,
 And seyde hym thus: "If thou tomorwé
 wende,

Thou shalt be dreynt, my tale is at an
 ende."

'He wook, and tolde his felawe what
 he mette,

And preydè hym his viage for to lette;

As for that day, he preydè hym to byde.

His felawe, that lay by his beddés syde,

Gan for to laughe, and scornéd him ful
 faste;

"No drem," quod he, "may so myn
 herte agaste,

That I wol letté for to do my thynges;

I setté not a straw by thy dremynges, 4280

For swevenes been but vanytees and
 japes;

Men dreme al day of owlés or of apes,

And eke of many a mazé therewithal;

Men dreme of thyng that never was ne
 shal;

But sith I see that thou wolt heere abyde,
 And thus forlewthen wilfully thy tyde,

God woot it reweth me, and have good
 day!"

And thus he took his leve, and wente his
 way;

But er that he hadde half his cours
 y-seyled,

Noot I nat why, ne what myschaunce it
 eyled, 4290

But casuelly the shippés botmé rente,
 And shipe and man under the water
 wente

In sighte of othere shippés it bisyde,

That with hem seyléd at the samé tyde!

And therefore, fairé Pertelote so deere,

By swiche ensamplés olde yet maistow
 leere,

That no man sholdé been to recchelees

Of dremés, for I seye thee doutlees,

4283. *éke, om. E⁶.*

That many a dreem ful soore is for to drede.

‘Lo, in the lyf of Seint Kenelm I rede,
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble kyng
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thyng.

A lite er he was mordred, on a day
His mordre in his avysoun he say.
His norice hym expowned every deel
His swevene, and bad hym for to kepe hym weel

For traisoun; but he nas but seven yeer oold,

And therfore litel talè hath he toold
Of any dreem, so hooly was his herte.
By God, I haddè levere than my sherte
That ye hadde rad his legende as have I.
Dame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,
Macrobeus, that writ the avisoun
In Affrike of the worthy Cipiou,
Affermeth dremes, and seith that they been

Warnynge of thyngès that men after seen;
And forther-moore, I pray yow looketh wel
In the Oldè Testament of Daniel,
If he heeld dremès any vanitee.

‘Reed eek of Joseph, and ther shul ye see

Wher dremès be somtyme,—I sey nat alle,—

Warnynge of thyngès that shul after falle.
Looke of Egipte the kyng, daun Pharao,
His baker and his butiller also,
Wher they ne feltè noon effect in dremes.
Whoso wol seken actes of sondry remes
May rede of dremès many a wonder thyng.

‘Lo, Cresus, which that was of Lydè kyng,

Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,
Which signified he sholde anhangèd bee?

‘Lo heere Andromacha, Ectorès wyf,
That day that Ector sholdè lese his lyf,
She dremèd on the samè nyght biforn,
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorne,
If thilkè day he wente into bataille;
She warnèd hym, but it myghte nat availe;

He wentè forth to fightè nathèles,

4300. *Kenelm*, murdered by his tutor at the desire of a wicked sister.

And he was slayn anon of Achilles;
But thilkè tale is al to longe to telle,
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle;
Shortly I seye, as for conclusoun,
That I shal han of this avisoun
Adversitee; and I seye forthermoor,
That I ne telle of laxatyves no stoor,
For they been venymès, I woot it weel;
I hem diffye, I love hem never a deel!

‘Now let us speke of myrthe, and stynte al this;

Madamè Pertelote, so have I blis,
Of o thyng God hath sent me largè grace;
For whan I se the beautee of youre face,
Ye been so scarlet reed aboute youre eyen,

It maketh al my dredè for to dyen,
For, al-so siker as *In principio*,
Mulier est hominis confusio,—
Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is,
“Wommen is mannès joye, and al his blis”;

For whan I feele a-nyght your softè syde,
Al be it that I may nat on yow ryde,
For that oure perche is maad so narwe, allas!

I am so ful of joye and of solas,
That I diffyè bothè swevene and dreem’;
And with that word he fly down fro the beam,

For it was day, and eke his hennès alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he hadde founde a corn, lay in the yerd.

Réal he was, he was namoore aferd,
He fethered Pertelotè twenty tyme,
And trad as oftè, er that it was pryme.
He looketh as it were a grym leoun,
And on his toos he rometh up and down;
Hym deignèd nat to sette his foot to grounde.

He chuketh whan he hath a corn y-founde,
And to hym rennen thanne his wyvès alle.

Thus roial, as a prince is in an halle,
Leve I this Chauntécleer in his pasture,
And after wol I telle his aventure.

4353. The real meaning of the Latin is: In the beginning, woman is man's destruction.

Whan that the monthe in which the
 world bigan,
 That hightē March, whan God first
 makēd man,
 Was compleet, and [y-]passēd were also,
 Syn March bigan, thritty dayēs and two,
 Bifel that Chauntēcleer in al his pryde,
 His sevene wyvēs walkyng by his syde,
 Caste up his eyen to the brightē sonne
 That in the signe of Taurus hadde y-ronne
 Twenty degrees and oon, and som-what
 moore,
 And knew by kynde, and by noon oother
 loore,
 That it was pryme, and crew with blisful
 stevene.
 'The sonne,' he seyde, 'is clomben up
 on hevene
 Fourty degrees and oon, and moore y-wis.
 Madamē Pertelote, my worldēs blis, 4390
 Herkneþ this blisful briddēs how they
 syngē,
 And se the fresshē flourēs how they
 spryngē ;
 Ful is myn herte of revel and solas !'
 But sodeynly hym fil a sorweful cas ;
 For ever the latter ende of joy is wo.
 God woot that worldly joye is soone
 ago,
 And if a rethor koudē faire endite,
 He in a cronycle sauffy myghte it write,
 As for a sovereyn notabilitee. 4399
 Now every wys man, lat him herknē me ;
 This storic is al so trewe, I undertake,
 As is the book of Launcelot de Lake,
 That wommen holde in ful greet reverence.
 Now wol I torne agayn to my sentence.
 A colfox, ful of sly iniquitee,
 That in the grove hadde wonnēd yerēs
 three,
 By heigh ymaginacioun forn-cast,
 The samē nyght thurgh-out the heggēs
 brast
 Into the yerd, ther Chauntēcleer the faire
 Was wont, and eek his wyvēs, to repaire ;
 And in a bed of wortēs stille he lay, 4411

4389. *Fourty*, H *Twenty*; but perhaps Chaucer is laughing at the cock.

4399. E and Heng. assign the saying to Petrus Comestor.

Til it was passēd undren of the day,
 Waityngē his tyme on Chauntēcleer to
 falle ;
 As gladly doon thise homycidēs alle
 That in await liggē to mordrē men.
 O falsē mordroure lurkyngē in thy den !
 O newē Scariot, newē Genyloun !
 Falsē dissymulour, O Greek Synoun,
 That broghtest Troye al outrēly to sorwe !
 O Chauntēcleer, acursēd be that morwe,
 That thou into that yerd flaugh fro the
 bemes ! 4421
 Thou were ful wel y-warnēd by thy dremēs
 That thilkē day was perilous to thee ;
 But what that God forwoot moot nedēs
 bee,
 After the opinioun of certein clerkis.
 Witnesse on hym that any parfit clerk is,
 That in scole is greet altercacioun
 In this mateere, and greet disputisoun,
 And hath been of an hundred thousand
 men ;
 But I ne kan nat bulte it to the bren, 4430
 As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn,
 Or Boece, or the bisshope Bradwardyn,
 Wheither that Goddēs worthy forwityng
 Streyneth me nedēly to doon a thyng,—
 Nedēly clepe I symple necessitee,—
 Or ellēs if free choys be graunted me
 To do that samē thyng, or do it noght,
 Though God forwoot it er that it was
 wrought ;
 Or if his wityng streyneth never a deel,
 But by necessitee condicioneel. 4440
 I wil nat han to do of swich mateere,
 My tale is of a cok, as ye may heere,
 That took his conseil of his wyf with sorwe,
 To walken in the yerd upon that morwe
 That he hadde met that dreem that I
 yow tolde.
 Wommennēs conseils been ful oftē colde ;
 Wommannēs conseil broghte us first to wo
 And made Adam fro Paradys to go,
 Ther as he was ful myrie and wel at
 ese ; 4449
 But for I noot to whom it myght displese,

4417. *Genyloun*, the betrayer of Roland.

4432. *Boece*, Boethius.

4432. *Bradwardyn*, author of the 'De Causa Dei contra Pelagium,' d. 1349.

If I conseil of wommen woldé blame,
 Passe over, for I seyde it in my game.
 Rede auctours where they trete of swich
 mateere,
 And what they seyn of wommen ye may
 heere;
 Thise ben the cokkés wordés, and nat
 myne,

I kan noon harm of no womman divyne !
 Faire in the soond, to bathe hire myrily,
 Lith Pertélote, and alle hire sustres by,
 Agayn the sonne, and Chauntécleer so free
 Soong murier than the mermayde in the
 see ; 4460

For *Physiologus* seith sikerly,
 How that they syngen wel and myrily.
 And so bifel that as he cast his eye
 Among the wortés, on a boterflye,
 He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.
 No-thing ne liste hym thanné for to
 crowe,
 But cride anon, 'Cok, cok !' and up he
 sterte,

As man that was affrayéd in his herte,—
 For naturelly a beest desireth flee
 Fro his contrarie, if he may it see, 4470
 Though he never erst hadde seyn it with
 his eye.

This Chauntécleer, whan he gan hym
 espye,
 He wolde han fled, but that the fox anon
 Seyde, 'Gentil sire, allas ! wher wol ye
 gon ?
 Be ye affrayed of me that am youre
 freend ?

Now, certés, I were worsé than a feend,
 If I to yow wolde harm or vileynye.
 I am nat come your conseil for tespye,
 But trewely the cause of my comynge
 Was oonly for to herkne how that ye
 syngé ; 4480
 For trewely, ye have as myrie a stevene
 As any angel hath that is in hevене.
 Therwith ye han in musyk moore feelynge
 Than hadde Boece, or any that kan syngé.
 My lord youre fader, — God his soulé
 blesse !

4461. *Physiologus*, i.e. the *Physiologus de naturis xii. animalium*, written by a certain Theobaldus.

4484. *Boece*. Boethius wrote a treatise on music.

And eek youre mooder, of hire gentillesse,
 Han in myn hous y-been to my greet
 ese,

And certés, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow
 plesce.

But for men speke of syngyng, I wol
 seye,—

So moote I brouké wel myne eyen
 tweye,— 4490

Save yow, I herdé never man so syngé
 As dide youre fader in the morwenynge.
 Certés, it was of herte, al that he song ;
 And for to make his voys the mooré strong,
 He wolde so peyne hym that with bothe
 his eyen

He mosté wynke, so loude he woldé cryen ;
 And stonden on his tiptoon therewithal,
 And strecché forth his nekké, long and
 smal ;

And eek he was of swich discrecioun
 That ther nas no man in no regioun 4500
 That hym in song or wisdom myghté
 passe.

I have wel rad, in "Daun Burnel the
 Asse,"

Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,
 For that a preestés sone yaf hym a knok
 Upon his leg, whil he was yong and nyce,
 He made hym for to lese his benefice ;
 But certeyn, ther nys no comparisoun
 Bitwixe the wisdom and discrecioun
 Of youré fader and of his subtiltee.

Now syngeth, sire, for seinté charitee ; 4510
 Lat se, konne ye youre fader countrefete.'

This Chauntécleer his wyngés gan to
 bete,

As man that koude his traysoun nat espie,
 So was he ravysshed with his flaterie.

Allas, ye lordés, many a fals flatour
 Is in youre courtes, and many a losengeour,
 That plesen yow wel mooré, by my feith,
 Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow
 seith,—

Redeth Ecclesiaste of flaterie,—
 Beth war, ye lordés, of hir trecherye. 4520

This Chauntécleer stood hye upon his
 toos

4502. *Daun Burnel the Asse*, in the *Speculum Stultorum* of Nigel Wireker.

4515. *ye lordes*, H *lordynges*.

4516. *courtes*, H *hous*.

Strecchyng his nekke, and heeld his eyen
cloos,

And gan to crowè loudè for the nones,
And daun Russell, the fox, stirte up atones,
And by the gargat hentè Chauntècleer,
And on his bak toward the wode hym
beer ;

For yet ne was ther no man that hym
sewed.

O destinee, that mayst nat been
eschewed !

Alas, that Chauntècleer fleigh fro the
bemes ! 4529

Allas, his wyf ne roghtè nat of dremes !
And on a Friday fil al this meschaunce.

O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce,
Syn that thy servant was this Chauntè-
cleer,

And in thy servyce dide al his poweer,
Moore for delit than world to multiplye,
Why woltestow suffre hym on thy day to
dye ?

O Gaufred, deerè maister soverayn,
That, whan thy worthy kyng Richard
was slayn

With shot, compleynèdest his deeth so
soore !

Why ne hadde I now thy sentence, and
thy loore, 4540

The Friday for to chide, as diden ye ?—

For on a Friday, soothly, slayn was he.
Thanne wolde I shewe yow how that I
koude pleyne

For Chauntèclerès drede, and for his
peyne.

Certès, swich cry, ne lamentacioun,
Was never of ladyes maad whan Ylioun
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streitè
sward,

Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam by the
berd,

And slayn hym,—as scith us *Eneydos*,—
As maden alle the hennès in the clos, 4550
Whan they had seyn of Chauntècleer the
sighte.

But sovereynly dame Pertelotè shrighte,
Ful louder than dide Hasdrubalès wyf,

^{4537.} *Gaufred*, Geoffrey of Vinesauf; author
of a treatise on the art of poetry, in which, to
show how such poems should be written, he be-
wailed the death of Richard.

Whan that hir housbonde haddè lost his lyf,
And that the Romayns haddè brend
Cartage,—

She was so ful of torment and of rage,
That wilfully into the fyr she sterte,
And brende herselfen with a stedefast
herte.

O woful hennès, right so criden ye,
As, whan that Nero brendè the citee 4560
Of Romè, cryden senatourès wyves,
For that hir husbondes losten alle hir
lyves

Withouten gilt,—this Nero hath hem slayn.
Now wol I tornè to my tale agayn.

This sely wydwe, and eek hir doghtres
two,

Herden this hennès crie and maken wo,
And out at dorès stirten they anon,
And syn the fox toward the grovè gon,
And bar upon his bak the cok away,
And cryden, 'Out ! harrow ! and weyl-
away ! 4570

Ha ! ha ! the fox !' and after hym they
ran,

And eek with stavès many another man ;
Ran Colle, oure dogge, and Talbot, and
Gerland

And Malkyn, with a dystaf in hir hand ;
Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray
hogges,

So were they fered for berkyng of the
dogges,

And shoutyng of the men and wommen
eek ;

They ronnè so hem thoughte hir hertè
breek.

They yollèden, as feendès doon in helle ;
The dokès cryden, as men wolde hem
quelle ; 4580

The gees, for fecèr, flowen over the trees ;
Out of the hyvè cam the swarm of bees ;
So hydous was the noys, *a benedicite* !

Certès, he Jakke Straw, and his meynee,
Ne made never shoutès half so shrille,
Whan that they wolden any Flemyng
kille,

As thilkè day was maad upon the fox.
Of bras they broghten bemès, and of box,

^{4586.} *Flemyng*, to whose competition the
English craftsmen objected.

Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe
 and powped,
 And therewithal they skriked and they
 howped ; 4590
 It semed as that hevene sholdé falle.

Now, goodé men, I pray yow herkneth
 alle ;

Lo, how Fortuné turneth sodeynly
 The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy !
 This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,
 In al his drede unto the fox he spak,
 And seyde, 'Sire, if that I were as ye,
 Yet wolde I seyn, as wys God helpé me,
 "Turneth agayn, ye proudé cherlés alle !
 A verray pestilence upon yow falle ; 4600
 Now am I come unto the wodes syde,
 Maugree youre heed, the cok shal heere
 abyde ;

I wol hym ete in feith, and that anon !"

The fox answerde, 'In feith it shal
 be don' ;

And as he spak that word, al sodeynly
 This cok brak from his mouth delyverly,
 And heighe upon a tree he fleigh anon ;
 And whan the fox saugh that he was
 y-gon,—

'Allas !' quod he, 'O Chauntecleer,
 allas !

I have to yow,' quod he, 'y-doon trespass,
 In as muche as I makéd yow aferd, 4611
 Whan I yow hente and brought out of the
 yerd ;

But, sire, I dide it of no wikke entente.
 Com down, and I shal telle yow what I
 mente ;

I shal seye sooth to yow, God help me so !'

'Nay thanne,' quod he, 'I shrewe
 us bothé two,

And first I shrewe myself, bothe blood
 and bones,

If thou bigyle me any ofter than ones.
 Thou shalt na mooré, thurgh thy flaterye,
 Do me to synge, and wynké with myn
 eye, 4620

For he that wynketh, whan he sholdé see,
 Al wilfully, God lat him never thee !'

'Nay,' quod the fox, 'but God yeve
 hym meschaunce,
 That is so undiscreet of governaunce
 That jangleth whan he sholdé holde his
 pees.'

Lo, swich it is for to be recchélees,
 And necligent, and truste on flaterye.
 But ye that holden this tale a folye,—
 As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,—
 Taketh the moralité, good men ; 4630
 For Seint Paul seith that al that writen is,
 To oure doctrine it is y-write y-wis ;
 Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille.
 Now, goodé God, if that it be thy wille,
 As seith my lord, so make us alle goode
 men,
 And brynge us to his heighé blisse !
 Amen.

Words of the Host to the Nun's Priest

'Sire Nonnés Preest,' oure Hooste
 seide anoon,
 'I-blesséd be thy breche and every stoon !
 This was a murie tale of Chauntecleer ;
 But, by my trouthe, if thou were seculer,
 Thou woldest ben a tredéfoul aright ; 4641
 For if thou have coráge, as thou hast
 might,
 The weré nede of hennés, as I wene,
 Ye, mo than sevene tymés seventene !
 Se, which braunés hath this gentil preest,
 So gret a nekke, and swich a largé breest !
 He loketh as a sparhawke with his eyen ;
 Him nedeth nat his colour for to dyen
 With brasile, ne with greyn of Portyngale.
 Now, sire, faire fallé yow for youré tale.
 And after that, he with ful merie chere
 Seide unto another as ye shullen heere.

4637. *Sire Nonnes Preest*. Only three
 one at Camb. and two at the Brit. Mus., contain
 this end-link. Its authenticity is not above
 suspicion ; l. 4641 repeats B. 3135, and 'seide
 unto another' could hardly have been written by
 Chaucer.

[TALES OF THE THIRD DAY]

[GROUP C]

DOCTOR'S TALE

Heere folweth The Phisiciens Tale

THER was, as telleth Titus Livius,
A knyght that calléd was Virginius,
Fulfil'd of honour and of worthynesse,
And strong of freendés and of greet
richesse.

This knyght a doghter haddé by his
wyf,—

No children hadde he mo in al his lyf.
Fair was this mayde in excellent beautee
Aboven every wight that man may see ;
For Nature hath with sovereyn diligence
Y-forméd hire in so greet excellence, 10
As though she woldé seyn, 'Lo, I, Natúre,
Thus kan I forme, and peynte a créature,
Whan that me list,—who kan me countre-
fete ?

Pigmalion ? Noght, though he ay forge
and bete,

Or grave, or peynté ; for I dar wel seyn
Apellés, Zanzis, sholdé werche in veyn,
Outher to grave, or peynte, or forge, or
bete,

If they presumed me to countrefete.
For He that is the Formere principal
Hath makéd me his vicaire-general 20
To forme and peynten erthely créaturis
Right as me list, and ech thyng in my
cure is

Under the mooné that may wane and
waxe ;

And for my werk right no thyng wol I axe ;

GROUP C. These two tales follow the Franklin's
in E. Dr. Furnivall is responsible for their
present placing, which is not a matter of certainty.

Doctor's Tale, taken, as to its incidents, as
Prof. Lounsbury shows, including the reference
to Livy, from the *Roman de la Rose*, ll. 6324-94.
In this tale H⁵ differ greatly from E and Heng. ;
though only a few of the variants can be here
recorded.

6. *No children*, H⁵ and never ne (H only, ne).

16. *Zanzis*, Zeuxis.

24. *werk right*, H⁵ *werké*.

My lord and I been ful of oon accord.
I made hire to the worshiþe of my lord ;
So do I alle myne othere créatures,
What colour that they han, or what
figures.'

Thus semeth me that Nature woldé seye.

This mayde of agé twelve yeer was
and tweye 30

In which that Nature haddé swich delit ;
For, right as she kan peynte a lillie whit,
And reed a rosé, right with swich peynture
She peynted hath this noble créature,
Er she were born, upon hir lymés fre,
Where as by right swiche colours sholdé
be ;

And Phebus dyéd hath hire tresses grete
Lyk to the stremés of his burnéd heete ;
And if that excellent was hire beautee,
A thousand-foold moore vertuuous was she.
In hire ne lakkéd no condicioun 41

That is to preysse, as by discrecioun.

As wel in goost as body chast was she,
For which she flouréd in virginitee
With alle humylitee and abstinence,
With alle attemperaunce and pacience,
With mesure eek of beryng and array.

Discreet she was in answeyng alway,
Though she were wise as Pallas, dar I
seyn ;

Hir facound eek, ful wommanly and
pleyn ; 50

No countrefeted termés hadde she
To semé wys ; but after hir degree
She spak, and alle hire wordés, moore
and lesse,

Sownynge in vertu and in gentillesse ;
Shamefast she was, in maydens shame-
fastnesse,

Constant in herte, and ever in bisynesse
To dryve hire out of ydel slogardye.

Bacus hadde of hire mouth right, no
maistrie,

25. *ful of oon*, H⁵ *fully at*.

For wyn and youthe dooth Venus
encresse, 59

As man in fyr wol casten oille or gresse.
And of hir owene vertu unconstreyned
She hath ful oftē tymē syk hire feyned,
For that she woldē fleen the compaignye
Where likly was to tretē of folyc,—
As is at feestēs, revels, and at daunces,
That been occasions of daliaunces.
Swich thyngēs maken children for to be
To soonē rype and boold, as men may se,
Which is ful perilous, and hath been yoore,
For al to soonē may she lernē loore 70
Of booldnesse, whan she woxen is a wyf.

And ye maistresses, in youre oldē lyf,
That lordēs doghtrēs han in governaunce,
Ne taketh of my wordes no displeaunce;
Thenketh that ye been set in governynges
Of lordēs doghtrēs, only for two thynges:
Outher for ye han kept youre honestee,
Or ellēs ye han falle in freletee,
And knowen wel ynough the oldē daunce,
And han forsaken fully swich meschaunce
For evermo: therefore for Cristēs sake 81
To teche hem vertu looke that ye ne
slake.

A thief of venysoun, that hath forlaft
His likerousnesse and al his oldē craft,
Kan kepe a forest best of any man;
Now kepeth wel, for if ye wolde ye kan;
Looke wel that ye unto no vice assente,
Lest ye be dampnēd for youre wikke
entente;

For who so dooth a traitour is certeyn;
And taketh kepe of that that I shal seyn;
Of allē tresons sovereyn pestilence 91
Is whan a wight bitrayseth innocence.

Ye fadrēs and ye moodrēs eek, also,
Though ye han children, be it oon or mo,
Youre is the charge of al hir surveiaunce,
Whil that they been under youre gover-
naunce;

Beth war, if by ensample of youre lyvyngē,
Or by youre negligence in chastisyngē,
That they ne perisse; for I dar wel seye,
If that they doon, ye shul it deere abeye.

74. *wordes*, H⁴ *word*.

82. H⁵ read *Kepeth wel tho that ye undertake*.

84. *olde*, H⁵ *thieves*.

86. *if ye wolde*, H⁵ and *ye wil*.

94. *mo*, E³ *two*.

Under a shepherde softe and necligent
The wolf hath many a sheepe and lamb
to-rent.

Suffiseth oon ensample now as heere,
For I moot turne agayne to my matere.

This mayde, of which I wol this tale
expresse,

So kepte hir self hir neded no maistresse;
For in hir lyvyng maydens myghten rede,
As in a book, every good word or dede
That longeth to a mayden vertuous,
She was so prudent and so bounteuous;
For which the fame out sprong on every
syde, 111

Bothe of hir beautee and hir bountee wyde,
That thurgh that land they preisēd hire,
echone

That lovēd vertu, save Envyē allone,
That sory is of oother mennēs wele,
And glad is of his sorwe and his unheele;
The doctour maketh this descripcioun.

This mayde upon a day wente in the
toun

Toward a temple, with hire mooder deere,
As is of yongē maydens the manere. 120
Now was ther thanne a justice in that toun,
That governour was of that regioun,
And so bifel this juge his eyen caste
Upon this mayde, avysyngē hym ful faste,
As she cam forby, ther as this juge stood.
Anon his hertē chaungēd and his mood,
So was he caught with beautee of this
mayde,

And to hymself ful pryvēly he sayde,
'This maydē shal be myn, for any man!'

Anon the feend into his hertē ran, 130
And taughte hym sodeynly that he by
slyghte

The mayden to his purpos wynnē myghte;
For certēs, by no force, ne by no meede,
Hym thoughte, he was nat able for to
speede;

For she was strong of freendēs, and eek she
Confermēd was in swich soverayn
bountee,

That wel he wiste he myghte hire never
wynne

105. *wol*, H⁵ *telle*.

117. *The doctour*, glossed 'Augustinus' in E².

125. *as this*, H⁵ *the*.

As for to maken hire with hir body synne;
For which by greet deliberacioun
He sente after a cherl, was in the toun, ¹⁴⁰
Which that he knew for-subtil and for-
boold.

This juge unto this cherl his tale hath
toold

In secree wise, and made hym to ensure
He sholdé telle it to no créature,
And if he dide he sholdé lese his heed.
Whan that assented was this curséd reed
Glad was this juge, and makéd him
greet cheere,

And yaf hym yiftés, precieuse and deere.

Whan shapen was al hire conspiracie,
Fro point to point, how that his lecherie
Parfournéd sholdé been ful subtilly, ¹⁵¹
As ye shul heere it after openly,
Hoom gooth the cherl, that highté
Claudius.

This falsé jugé that highte Apius,—
So was his namé, for this is no fable,
But knowen for historial thyng notable;
The sentence of it sooth is, out of doute,—
This falsé jugé gooth now faste aboute
To hasten his delit al that he may;
And so bifel soone after, on a day, ¹⁶⁰
This falsé juge, as telleth us the storie,
As he was wont, sat in his consistórie:
And yaf his doomés upon sondry cas,
This falsé cherl cam forth, a ful greet pas,
And seyde, 'Lord, if that it be youre wille,
As dooth me right upon this pitous bille,
In which I pleyne upon Virginus;
And if that he wol seyn it is nat thus,
I wol it preeve, and fyndé good witnesse
That sooth is that my billé wol expresse.'

The juge answerde, 'Of this in his
absence

I may nat yeve diffynytyve sentence;
Lat do hym calle, and I wol gladly heere;
Thou shalt have al right and no wrong
heere.'

Virginus cam to wite the juges wille,
And right anon was rad this curséd bille;
The sentence of it was as ye shul heere:—

To you, my lord, sire Apius so deere,

^{138.} *maken*, H⁶ *make*.

^{140.} *cherl*, here and passim H⁵ read *clerk*; the *Roman de la Rose* has *serjaunt*.

*Sheweth youre pouré servant Claudius,
How that a knyght, called Virginus, 180
Agayns the lawe, agayn al equitee,
Holdeth, expres agayn the wyl of me,
My servant, which that is my thral by right,
Which fro myn hous was stole upon a
nyght,*

*Whil that shewas ful yong; this wol I preeve
By witnesse, lord, so that it nat yow greeve
She nys his doghter, nat, what so he seye;
Wherfore to you, my lord, the juge, I preye,
Yeld me my thral, if that it be youre wille.
Lo, this was al the sentence of his bille.*

Virginus gan upon the cherl biholde,
But hastily, er he his talé tolde,
And wolde have preevéd it, as sholde a
knyght,

And eek by witnessyng of many a wight,
That it was fals that seyde his adver-
sarie,—

This curséd jugé woldé no thyng tarie,
Ne heere a word moore of Virginus,
But yaf his juggément, and seyde thus:—

'I deeme anon this cherl his servant
have; ¹⁹⁹

Thou shalt na lenger in thyn hous hir save.
Go, bryng hire forth, and put hire in
oure warde.

The cherl shal have his thral; this I
awarde.'

And whan this worthy knyght,
Virginus,

Thurgh sentence of this justice Apius,
Mosté by force his deéré doghter yeven
Unto the juge, in lecherie to lyven,
He gooth hym hoom and sette him in his
halle,

And leet anon his deéré doghter calle,
And with a facé deed as asshen colde,
Upon hir humble face he gan biholde, ²¹⁰
With fadrés pitee stikyng thurgh his herte,
Al wolde he from his purpos nat converte.

'Doghter,' quod he, 'Virginia by thy
name,

Ther been two weyés, outhér deeth or
shame,

That thou most suffre; alas! that I was
bore!

For never thou deservedest wherfore
To dyen with a swerd, or with a knyf.

O deerè doghter, endere of my lyf,
Which I have fostred up with swich
plesaunce

That thou were never out of my remem-
braunce ; 220

O doghter, which that art my lastè wo,
And in my lyf my lastè joye also ;
O gemme of chastitee ! in pacience
Take thou thy deeth, for this is my
sentence.

For love, and nat for hate, thou most be
deed :

My pitous hand moot smyten of thyn
heed !

Allas ! that ever Apius the say !
Thus hath he falsly juggèd the to day ' ;
And tolde hire al the cas, as ye bfore
Hian herd, nat nedeth for to telle it moore.

' O mercy, deerè fader ! ' quod this
mayde, 231

And with that word she both hir armès
layde

About his nekke, as she was wont to do ;
The teeris bruste out of hir eyen two,
And seyde, ' Goodè fader, shal I dye ?
Is ther no grace, is ther no remedye ? '

' No, certès, deerè doghter myn, ' quod
he.

' Thanne yif me leyscr, fader myn, '
quod she,

' My deeth for to compleyne a litel space,
For *pardee* Jepté yaf his doghter grace 240
For to compleyne, er he hir slow, alas !
And God it woot, no thyng was hir trespas,
But for she ran hir fader first to see,
To welcome hym with greet solempntee. '
And with that word she fil aswowne anon,
And after, whan hir swowning is agon,
She riseth up, and to hir fader sayde,
' Blissed be God, that I shal dye a mayde ;
Yif me my deeth, er that I have a shame ;
Dooth with youre child youre wyl, a
Goddès name ! ' 250

And with that word she preyed hym
ful ofte

That with his swerd he woldè smytè
softe ;

And with that word aswownè doun she fil.
Hir fader, with ful sorweful herte and wil,

238. *leyscr*, H⁵ *leve*.

Hir heed of smoot, and by the tope it
hente,

And to the juge he gan it to presente,
As he sat yet in doom in consistorie ;
And whan the juge it saugh, as seith the
storie,

He bad to take hym and anchange hym
faste ; 259

But right anon a thousand peple in thraste,
To save the knyght, for routhe and for
pitee ;

For knowen was the false iniquitee.

The peple anon hath suspect of this thyng,
By manere of the cherlès chalangyng,
That it was by the assent of Apius ;

They wisten wel that he was lecherus ;
For which unto this Apius they gon,
And caste hym in a prisoun right anon,
Wher as he slow hymself ; and Claudius,
That servant was unto this Apius, 270

Was demed for to hange upon a tree ;

But that Virginius, of his pitee,

So preyed for hym that he was exiled,
And ellès, certès, he had been bigyled.

The remenant were anhangèd, moore and
lesse,

That were consentant of this cursednesse.

Heere men may seen how synne hath
his merite.

Beth war, for no man woot whom God
wol smyte,

In no degree ; ne in which manere wyse
The worm of consciencè may agryse 280
Of wikked lyf, though it so pryvee be
That no man woot ther-of but God and
he ;

For be he lewed man, or ellis lered,
He noot how soone that he shal been
aferd ;

Therefore, I redè yow, this conseil take,
Forsaketh synne, er synnè yow forsake.

*The wordes of the Hoost to the Phisicien
and the Pardonur*

Oure Hoostè gan to swere as he were
wood ;

275. *The remenant*, the witnesses promised
in l. 186.

278. *whom*, H⁵ *how*.

283. H⁵ read *if her (whether) that he be lewed
man or lered*.

'Harrow!' quod he, 'by naylès, and
by blood!

This was a fals cherl and a fals justise!
As shameful deeth as hertè may devyse
Come to thise jugès, and hire advocatz!
Algate this sely mayde is slayn, allas!
Allas! to deere boughtè she beautee!
Wherefore I seye al day, as men may see,
That yiftès of Fortune and of Nature
Been cause of deeth to many a créature.
Hire beautee was hire deth, I dar wel
sayn;

Allas! so pitously as she was slayn!
Of bothè yiftès that I speke of now
Men han ful oftè moorè harm than prow.

'But trewely, myn owene maister
deere,

This is a pitous talè for to heere;
But nathelees, passe over, is no fors;
I pray to God so save thy gentil cors,
And eek thine uryngals, and thy jurdones,
Thyn Ypocras, and eek thy Galiones,
And every boyste ful of thy letuarie;
God blesse hem, and oure lady Seintè
Marie!

So moot I theen, thou art a proprè man,
And lyk a prelat, by Seint Ronyan!
Seyde I nat wel, I kan nat speke in terme?
But wel I woot thou doost myn herte to
erme

That I almoost have caught a cardynale.
By *corpus* bones! but I have triacle,
Or elles a draughte of moyste and corny
ale,

Or but I heere anon a myrie talc,
Myn herte is lost, for pitee of this mayde.
Thou *beel amy*, thou Pardoner,' he sayde,
'Telle us som myrthe, or japès, right
anon!'

'It shal be doon,' quod he, 'by
Seint Ronyon!

'But first,' quod he, 'heere at this alè
stake

289. *fals cherl and*, H⁴ *curstèd thej*.

290. *shameful*, H² *schendful*.

291, 292. H² have the more vigorous couplet:

So falle upon his body and his boones,
The devel I bykenne him, al at oones.

317. *lost*, H *brost*.

319. H reads *Tel us a tale for thou canst
many oon*, ending next line and that anon.

I wol bothe drynke and eten of a cake.'

And right anon the gentils gonne to
crye,

'Nay! lat hym telle us of no ribaudye;
Telle us som moral thyng, that we may
leere

Som wit, and thannè wol we gladly heere.'

'I graunte, y-wis,' quod he, 'but I
moot thynke

Upon som honeste thyng, while that I
drynke.'

*Heere folweth The Preamble of the
Pardoners Tale*

'Lordynges,' quod he, 'in chirchés
whan I preche,

I peynè me to han an hauteyn speche,
And ryngè it out as round as gooth a
belle,

For I kan al by rotè that I telle.

My theme is alwey oon, and ever was,—
Radix malorum est Cupiditas.

'First, I pronouncè whennès that I
come,

And thanne my bullès shewe I, alle and
some;

Oure ligè lordès seel on my patente,
That shewe I first, my body to warente,
That no man be so boold, ne preest, ne
clerk,

Me to destourbe of Cristès hooly werk;
And, after that, thanne telle I forth my
tales,

Bullès of popès and of cardynales,
Of patriarkes and bishoppès I shewe,
And in Latyn I speke a wordès fewe

To saffron with my predicacioun,
And for to stire hem to devocioun;

Thanne shewe I forth my longè cristal
stones

Y-crammèd ful of cloutès and of bones,—
Relikes been they, as wenen they echoon;
Thanne have I in latoun a sholder boon

326, 327. H reads *Gladly, quod he, and sayde
as ye schal heere, But in the cuppe wil I me be-
thinke*.

328. *thyng*, H *tale*.

329. *chirches*, H³ *chirche*.

331. *as round as gooth*, H *as lowd as doth*.

345. *saffron*, H⁴ *savore*.

Which that was of an hooly Jewés sheepe.

“Goode men,” I seye, “taak of my wordés keepe,—

If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,
If cow, or calf, or sheepe, or oxé swelle
That any worm hath ete, or worm
y-stonge,

Taak water of that welle and wassh his tonge,

And it is hool anon; and forthermoor
Of pokkés, and of scabbe, and every soor,
Shal every sheepe be hool that of this
welle

Drynketh a draughte. Taak kepe eek
what I telle. 360

If that the goode-man that the beestés
oweth

Wol every wyke, er that the cok hym
croweth,

Fastyngé, drinken of this welle a draughte,
As thilké hooly Jew oure eldrés taughte,
His beestés and his stoor shal multiplie.

And, sires, also it heeleth jalousie,
For though a man be falle in jalous rage,
Lat maken with this water his potage,
And never shal he moore his wyf
mystriste,

Though he the soothe of hir défauté
wiste,— 370

Al had she taken preestes two or thre.
Heere is a miteyn eek, that ye may se;
He that his hand wol putte in this mitayn,
He shal have multiplieng of his grayn,
Whan he hath sowén, be it whete or otes,
So that he offré pens, or ellés grotés.

“Goode men and wommen, o thyng
warne I yow,

If any wight be in this chirché now
That hath doon synné horrible, that he
Dar nat for shame of it y-shryven be, 380
Or any womman, be she yong or old,
That hath y-maad hir housbonde coké-
wold,

Swich folk shal have no power ne no
grace

To offren to my relikes in this place;
And whoso fyndeth hym out of swich blame
They wol come up and offren on Goddés
name,

385. *blame, F. fame.*

And I assoille hem by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle y-graunted was to
me.”

‘By this gaude have I wonné, yeer
by yeer,

An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner.
I stondé lyk a clerk in my pulpet, 390
And whan the lewéd peple is down y-set,
I preché so as ye han herd bifoore,
And telle an hundred falsé japés moore;
Thanne payne I me to strecché forth the
nekke,

And est and west upon the peple I hekke,
As dooth a dowvé, sittinge on a berne;
Myne handés and my tongé goon so yerne,
That it is joye to se my bisynesse.

Of avarice and of swich cursednesse 400
Is al my prechyng, for to make hem free
To yeven hir pens, and namely unto me;
For myn entente is nat but for to wyinne,
And no thyng for correccioun of synne.
I rekké never whan that they been beryed,
Though that hir soulés goon a-blaké-
beried;

For certés many a predicacioun
Comth offé tyme of yvel entencioun;
Som for plesaunce of folk and flaterye,
To been avauncéd by ypocrisie; 410
And som for veyné glorie, and som for
hate,

For whan I dar noon oother weyes debate,
Thanne wol I syngé hym with my tongé
smerte

In prechyng, so that he shal nat asterte
To been defamed falsly, if that he
Hath trespassed to my bretheren or to me;
For though I tellé noght his propre name,
Men shal wel knowé that it is the same,
By signés, and by othere circumstances.
Thus quyte I folk that doon us dis-
plesances; 420

Thus spitte I out my venym under hewe
Of hoolynesse, to semen hooly and trewe.

‘But, shortly, myn entente I wol
devyse,—

I preche of no thyng but for coveityse;
Therefore my theme is yet and ever was,
Radix malorum est Cupiditas.

Thus kan I preche agayn that samé vice
Which that I use, and that is avarice;

But though myself be guilty in that synne
 Yet kan I maken oother folk to twynne
 From avarice, and soorè to repente ; 431
 But that is nat my principal entente ;
 I prechè no thyng but for coveitise.
 Of this mateere it oghte ynogh suffice.

‘Thanne telle I hem ensamples many
 oon

Of oldè stories longè tyme agoon,—
 For lewèd peple loven talès olde,—
 Swiche thyngès kan they wel reporte and
 holde.

What ! trowè ye, the whilès I may preche,
 And wynnè gold and silver for I teche,
 That I wol lyve in poverte wilfully ? 441
 Nay, nay, I thoghte it never, trewely,
 For I wol preche and begge in sondry
 landes ;

I wol nat do no labour with myne handes,
 Ne makè baskettes and lyve therby,
 By cause I wol nat beggen ydelly.
 I wol noon of the Apostles countrefete,
 I wol have moneie, wollè, chese and whete,
 Al were it yeven of the povereste page,
 Or of the povereste wydwe in a village,
 Al sholde hir children stervè for famyne.
 Nay, I wol drynkè licour of the vyne,
 And have a joly wenche in every toun ;
 But herkneþ, lordynges, in conclusioun.

‘Youre likyng is that I shal telle a tale.
 Now have I dronke a draughte of corny
 ale,

By God, I hope I shal yow telle a thyng
 That shal by resoun been at youre likyng ;
 For though myself be a ful vicious man,
 A moral tale yet I yow tellè kan, 460
 Which I am wont to prechè, for to wynnè.
 Now hoold youre pees, my tale I wol
 bigynne.’

not an allegory

PARDONER'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Pardoners Tale

In Flaundrès whilom was a compaignye
 Of yongè folk, that haunteden folye,

Pardoner's Tale. The earliest form of this tale is a Buddhist Birth-Story in the *Vedabha Jataka*; analogues exist in Persian, Arabic, etc., and in the *Cento Nouvelle Antiche*, but Chaucer's particular original is unknown.

As riot, hasard, stywès and taverne,
 Where-as with harpès, lutès and gyternes,
 They daunce and pleyen at dees, bothe
 day and nyght,

And eten also, and drynken over hir
 myght,

Thurgh which they doon the devel sacrifice
 Withinne that develes temple, in cursèd
 wise, 470

By superfluytee abhomynable.

Hir othès been so grete and so dampnable
 That it is grisly for to heere hem swere ;
 Oure blissèd Lordès body they to-tere ;
 Hem thoughte that Jewès rente hym
 noght ynough,

And ech of hem at otheres synnè lough ;
 And right anon thanne comen tombesteres
 Fetys and smale, and yongè frutesteres,
 Syngeres with harpès, baudès, wafereres,
 Whiche been the verray develes officeres,
 To kyndle and blowe the fyr of lecherye,
 That is annexèd unto glotonye.

The Hooley Writ take I to my wisesse
 That luxurie is in wyn and dronkenesse.

‘Lo, how that dronken Looth, un-
 kyndely,

Lay by his doghtrès two unwityngly ;
 So dronke he was he nyste what he
 wroughte.

Herodès, (whoso wel the storiessoghte,)
 When he of wyn was repleet at his feeste,
 Right at his owenè table, he yaf his heeste
 To sleen the Baptist John, ful giltélees.

Seneca seith a good word, doutélees ;
 He seith he kan no differencè fynde
 Bitwix a man that is out of his mynde
 And a man which that is dronckelewe,
 But that woodnessè, fallen in a shrewe,
 Persévereth lenger than dooth dronke-
 nesse.

O glotonyè, ful of cursèdnesse ;

O causèd first of oure confusioun ;

O original of oure dampnacioun ; 500

Til Crist hadde boght us with his blood
 agayn !

Ló, how deerè, shortly for to sayn,

474. *Oure blissèd Lordes body*, etc. The phrase occurs also in the Parson's Tale.

492. *Seneca*, E⁶ *Senec* ; Corp.² reading *ek good wordes for a good word*. Tyrwhitt traces the reference to *F. p.* 83.

Aboght was thilkè curséd vileynye ;
Corrupt was al this world for glotonye :
Adam oure fader, and his wyf also,
Fro Paradys, to labour and to wo
Were dryven for that vice, it is no
drede,—

For whil that Adam fasted, as I rede,
He, was in Paradys, and whan that he
Eet of the fruyt deffended, on the tree, 510
Anon he was out cast to wo and peyne.
O glotonye, on thee wel oghte us pleyne !

O, wiste a man how manye maladyes
Folwen of excesse and of glotonyes,
He woldè been the moorè mesurable
Of his dietè, sittynge at his table !
Allas ! the shortè throte, the tendrè mouth,
Maketh that est and west, and north and
south,

In erthe, in eir, in water, man to-swynke
To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and
drynke ! 520

Of this matiere, O Paul, wel kanstow
trete !

‘Mete unto wombe, and wombe eek
unto mete,

Shal God destroyen bothe,’ as Paulus seith.
Allas ! a foul thyng is it, by my feith,
To seye this word, and fouler is the dede
Whan man so drynketh of the white and
rede,

That of his throte he maketh his pryvee,
Thurgh thilkè curséd superfluitee.

The Apostel wepyng seith ful pitously,
‘Ther walken manye of whiche yow
tould have I, 530

I seye it now wepyng with pitous voys,
That they been enemys of Cristès croys,
Of whiche the ende is deeth, wombe is
hir god.’

O wombe ! O bely ! O stynkyng is thi
cod !

Fulfilled of donge and of corrupcioun !
At either ende of thee foul is the soun ;
How greet labour and cost is thee to
fynde !

Thise cookès, how they stampe, and
streyn, and grynde,

508. as *I rede*, glossed: Ieronimus contra
Iouianum (Bk. ii. cap. 15).

534. *is thi*, om. E⁶.

And turnen substaunce into accident,
To fulfillen al thy likerous talent ! 540
Out of the hardè bonès knokkè they
The mary, for they castè noght awaye
That may go thurgh the golet softe and
swoote.

Of spicerie, of leef, and bark, and roote,
Shal been his sauce y-makèd by delit,
To make hym yet a newer appetit ;
But certès he that haunteth swiche delices
Is deed, whil that he lyveth in tho vices.

A lecherous thyng is wyn, and dronke-
nesse

Is ful of stryvyng and of wrecchednesse.
O dronkè man ! disfigured is thy face, 551
Sour is thy breeth, foul artow to embrace,
And thurgh thy dronkè nose semeth the
soun,

As though thou seydest ay, ‘Sampsoun !
Sampsoun !’

And yet, God woot, Sampsoun drank
never no wyn.

Thou fallest as it were a stykèd swyn,
Thy tonge is lost and al thyn honeste cure ;
For dronkenesse is verray sepulture
Of mannès wit and his discrecioun ;
In whom that drynke hath dominacioun,
He kan no conseil kepe, it is no drede. 561
Now kepe yow fro the white and fro the
rede,

And namely fro the whitè wyn of Lepe,
That is to selle in Fysshstrete, or in Chepe.
This wyn of Spaignè crepeth subtilly
In othere wynès growynge fastè by,
Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee,
That whan a man hath dronken draughtès
thre,

And weneth that he be at hoom in Chepe,
He is in Spaigne right at the toune of
Lepe,— 570

Nat at the Rochele, neat Burdeux-toun,—
And thannè wol he seye, ‘Sampsoun,
Sampsoun !’

But herkneth, lordyngs, o word, I yow
preye,

539. *turnen substaunce into accident*, alter the
whole character of. Chaucer is imitating the
chapter De Gula in the *De Contemptu Mundi* of
Innocent III.

563. *Lepe*, near Cadiz.

564. *Fysshstrete*, H *Fleetstreet*.

That alle the sovereyn actès, dar I seye,
Of victories in the Oldè Testament,
Thurgh verray God that is omnipotent,
Were doon in abstinence and in preyere;
Looketh the Bible and ther ye may it
leere.

Looke, Attila, the gretè conquerour,
Deyde in his sleepe, with shame and
dishonour, 580

Bledyng ay at his nose in dronkenesse.
A capitayn sholde lyve in sobrenesse;
And over al this avyseth yow right wel
What was comaunded unto Lamuel,—
Nat Samuel, but Lamuel seye I;
Redeth the Bible, and fynde it expresly
Of wyn-yevyng to hem that han justise.
Namoure of this, for it may wel suffice.

And now that I have spoken of glo-
tonye,

Now wol I yow deffenden hasardrye. 590
Hasard is verray mooder of lesynges,
And of deccite, and cursèd forswerynges,
Blaspheyme of Crist, manslaughtre, and
wast also

Of catel, and of tyme, and forthermo
It is repreeve and contrarie of honour
For to ben holde a commune hasardour
And ever the hyer he is of estaat,
The moorè is he holden desolaat.
If that a pryncè useth hasardrye
In allè governaunce and policyc, 600
He is, as by commune opinioun,
Y-holde the lasse in reputacioun.

Stilbon, that was a wys embassadour,
Was sent to Corynthe in ful greet honour
Fro Lacidomye to maken hire alliaunce;
And whan he cam, hym happedè *par*
chaunce

That alle the gretteste that were of that
lond

Pléyngge attè hasard he hem fond;
For which, as soonè as it myght be,
He stal hym hoom agayn to his contree,
And seyde, 'Ther wol I nat lese my
name, 611

584. *Lamuel*, the mysterious king of Prov.
xxx. 1.

603. *Stilbon*. The story is told in the *Poly-
craticus* (Bk. i. cap. v.) of John of Salisbury;
the ambassador's name there being given as
Chilon

Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame,
Yow for to allie unto none hasardours;
Sendeth othere wise embassadours,
For, by my trouthe, me were levere dye,
Than I yow sholde to hasardours allye;
For ye that been so glorious in honours,
Shul nat allyen yow with hasardours,
As by my wyl, ne as by my trectee!'

This wisè philosophrè thus seyde hec. 620

Looke eek that to the kyng Demetrius,
The kyng of Parthès, as the book seith us,
Sente him a paire of dees of gold, in scorn,
For he hadde usèd hasard ther-biforn;
For which he heeld his glorie or his
renoun

At no value or reputacioun.

Lordès may fynden oother maner pley
Honeste ynough to dryve the day away.

Now wol I speke of othès false and
grete

A word or two, as oldè bookès trecte. 630
Gret sweryng is a thyng abhominable,
And fals sweryng is yet moore reprevable.
The heighè God forbad sweryng at al,—
Witnesse on Mathew, but in special
Of sweryng seith the hooly Jeremye,
'Thou shalt seye sooth thynce othès, and
nat lye

And swere in doom, and cek in rightwis-
nesse';

But ydel sweryng is a cursèdnesse.
Bihoold and se, that in the firstè table
Of heighè Goddès heestès, honorable, 640
How that the seconde heeste of hym is
this:

'Take nat my name in ydel, or amys';
Lo, rather he forbedeth swich sweryng
Than homicide, or many a cursèd thyng;
I seye that as by ordè thus it stondeth.
This knowne, that his heestès under-
stondeth,

How that the seconde heeste of God is
that;

And forther over, I wol thee telle, al plat,
That vengeance shal nat parten from his
hous

621. *Demetrius*. This story also is from the
Polycraticus.

641. *the seconde heeste*. By the Roman
Church the first and second commandments are
regarded as one, and the tenth divided into two.

That of his othes is to outrageous, — 650
 'By Goddès precious herte,' and 'By
 his nayles,'

And 'By the blood of Crist that is in
 Hayles,'

'Sevene is my chaunce, and thyn is cynk
 and treye,

By Goddès armès, if thou falsly pleye,
 This daggere shal thurghout thyn herté
 go !'

This fruyt cometh of the bicchéd bonés
 two,

Forsweryng, iré, falsnesse, homycide.

Now for the love of Crist that for us dyde,
 Leveth youre othés, bothé grete and
 smale.

But, sires, now wol I tellé forth my tale.

This riotourés thre, of whiche I telle,
 Longe erst er primé rong of any belle,
 Were set hem in a tavernne for to drynke ;
 And as they sat they herde a bellé clynke
 Biforn a cors, was caried to his grave.

That oon of hem gan callen to his knave :
 'Go bet,' quod he, 'and axé redily
 What cors is this that passeth heer forby,
 And looke that thou reporte his namé
 weel.'

'Sire,' quod this boy, 'it nedeth
 never a deel, 670

It was me toold er ye cam heere two
 houres ;

He was, *pardée*, an old felawe of youre,
 And sodeynly he was y-slayn to-nyght,
 For-dronke, as he sat on his bench upright ;
 Ther cam a privee theef, men clepeth
 Deeth,

That in this contree al the peplé sleeth,
 And with his spere he smoot his herte
 atwo,

And wente his wey withouten wordés mo.
 He hath a thousand slayn this pestilence,
 And, maister, er ye come in his presence,
 Me thynketh that it weré necessarie 681
 For to be war of swich an adversarie ;
 Beth redy for to meete hym evermoore ;
 Thus taughté me my dame ; I sey na-
 moore.'

'By Sainte Marié !' seyde this taverner,

652. *Hayles*, *Hailes Abbey* in Gloucestershire.
 659. *Leveth*, *E³ Lete*.

'The child seith sooth, for he hath
 slayn this yeer

Henne over a mile, withinne a greet
 village,

Bothe man and womman, child, and
 hyne, and page ;

I trowe his habitacioun be there ;

To been avyséd greet wysdom it were, 690
 Er that he dide a man a dishonour.'

'Ye, Goddès armès !' quod this riotour,
 'Is it swich peril with hym for to meete ?
 I shal hym seke by wey, and eek by strete ;
 I make avow to Goddès digné bones !

I herkneth, felawés, we thre been al ones,
 Lat ech of us holde up his hand til oother,
 And ech of us bicomen otheres brother,
 And we wol sleen this falsé traytour,
 Deeth ; 699

He shal be slayn, he that so manye sleeth,
 By Goddès dignitee, er it be nyght !'

Togidres han thise thre hir trouthés
 plight

To lyve and dyen ech of hem for oother,
 As though he were his owene y-boré
 brother ;

And up they stirte, al dronken, in this
 rage ;

And forth they goon towardés that village
 (Of which the taverner hadde spoke biforn
 And many a grisly ooth thanne han they
 sworn ;

And Cristés blessed body they to-rente,—
 Deeth shal be deed, if that they may
 hym hente. 710

Whan they han goon nat fully half a
 mile,

Right as they wolde han troden over a
 stile,

An oold man and a pouré with hem mette ;
 This oldé man ful mekely hem grette,
 And seyde thus : 'Now, lordés, God
 yow see !'

The proudest of thise riotourés three
 Answerde agayn, 'What, carl with sory
 grace,

Why artow al for-wrappéd, save thy face ?
 Why lyvéstow so longe in so greet age ?'

This oldé man gan looke in his visage,
 And seyde thus : 'For I ne kan nat fynde

704. *y-bore*, *H³ sworne*.

A man, though that I walkéd into Ynde,
Neither in citee, ne in no village,
That woldé chaunge his youthé for myn
age ;

And therfore moot I han myn agé stille,
As longé tyme as it is Goddés wille.
Ne Deeth, alas ! ne wol nat han my lyf ;
Thus walke I, lyk a restélecs kaityf,
And on the ground, which is my moodrés
gate,

I knokké with my staf, erly and late, 730
And seyde, " Leevé mooder, leet me in !
Lo, how I vanysshe, flessch and blood
and skyn ;

Allas ! whan shul my bonés been at reste ?
Mooder, with yow wolde I chaungé my
cheste

That in my chambré longé tyme hath be,
Ye, for an heyré-clowt to wrappé me !"
But yet to me she wol nat do that grace,
For which ful pale and welkéd is my face.

' But, sires, to yow it is no curteisye
To speken to an old man vileynye, 740
But he trespasse in word, or elles in dede.
In Hooly Writ ye may your self wel rede,
Agayns an oold man, hoor upon his heed,
Ye sholde arise ; wherfore I yeveyow reed,
Ne dooth unto an oold man noon harm
now,

Namoore than ye wolde men did to yow
In agé, if that ye so longe abyde.
And God be with yow, where ye go or
ryde ;

I moote go thider as I have to go.'

' Nay, oldé cherl, by God, thou shalt
nat so !' 750

Seydè this oother hasardour anon ;

' Thou partest nat so lightly, by Seint
John !

Thou spak right now of thilké traytour,
Deeth,

That in this contree alle oure freendés
sleeth ;

Have heer my trouthe, as thou art his
espye,

Telle where he is, or thou shalt it abyde,
By God and by the hooly sacrament !

For soothly, thou art oon of his assent
To sleen us yongé folk, thou falsé thief !'

' Now, sires,' quod he, ' if that ye
be so leef 760

To fyndé Deeth, turne up this croked wey,
For in that grove I lafte hym, by my fey,
Under a tree, and there he wole abyde ;
Noght for youre boost he wole him no
thyng hyde.

Se ye that ook ? Right there ye shal
hym fynde.

God savé yow that boghte agayn man-
kynde,

And yow amende !' thus seyde this oldé
man ;

And evèrich of thise riotourés ran

Til he cam to that tree, and ther they
founde, 769

Of floryns fyne, of gold y-coynéd rounde,
Wel ny a seven busshels, as hem thoughte.
No lenger thanné after Deeth they
soughte,

But ech of hem so glad was of that sighte,
For that the floryns been so faire and
brighte,

That doun they sette hem by this precious
hoord.

The worste of hem he spak the firsté word.
' Bretheren,' quod he, ' taak kepé
what I seye ;

My wit is greet, though that I bourde
and pleye.

This tresor hath Fortúne unto us yeven

In myrthe and joliftece oure lyf to lyven,
And lightly as it comth so wol we spende.

Ey, Goddés precious dignitee ! who wende
To-day, that we sholde han so fair a
grace ?

But myghte this gold be caried fro this
place

Hoom to myn hous, or ellés unto
yours,—

For wel ye woot that al this gold is
oures,—

Thanne weré we in heigh felicitee.

But trewely, by daye it may nat bee ;

Men woldé scyn that we were thevès
stronge, 789

And for oure owené tresor doon us hongé.

732. vanysshe, H² wane.

756. or thou shalt it abyde, H² or elles thou
shalt dye.

771. seven, E³ eighte.

This tresor moste y-caried be by nyghte
As wisely and as slyly as it myghte.
Wherefore, I rede that cut among us alle
Be drawe, and lat se wher the cut wol
falle;

And he that hath the cut with herté blithe
Shal renné to the towne, and that ful
swithe,

And brynge us breed and wyn ful prively,
And two of us shul kepen subtilly
This tresor wel; and if he wol nat tarie,
Whan it is nyght we wol this tresor carie,
By oon assent, where as us thynketh best.
That oon of hem the cut broghte in his
fest,

And bad hem drawe and looke where it
wol falle;

And it fil on the yongeste of hem alle,
And forth toward the toun he wente anon;
And al so sooné as that he was gon,
That oon of hem spak thus unto that
oother:

‘Thow knowest wel thou art my sworné
brother;

Thy profit wol I tellé thee anon; 809
Thou woost wel that our felawe is agon,
And heere is gold, and that ful greet
plentee,

That shal departed been among us thre;
But nathélees, if I kan shape it so
That it departed were among us two,
Hadde I nat doon a freendés torn to thee?’

That oother answerde, ‘I noot how
that may be;

He woot how that the gold is with us
tweye;

What shal we doon, what shal we to hym
seye?’

‘Shal it be conseil?’ seyde the firsté
shrewe, 819

‘And I shal tellen thee in wordés fewe
What we shal doon, and bryngen it wel
aboute.’

‘I graunté,’ quod that oother, ‘out
of doute,

That by my trouthe I shal thee nat
biweye.’

‘Now,’ quod the firste, ‘thou woost
wel we be tweye,

And two of us shul strengre be than oon.

Looke whan that he is set, and right
anon

Arys, as though thou woldest with hym
pleye,

And I shal ryve hym thurgh the sydés
tweye,

Whil that thou storgelest with hym as in
game,

And with thy daggere looke thou do the
same; 830

And thanne shal al this gold departed be,
My deeré freend, bitwixen me and thee.
Thanne may we bothe oure lustés all
fulfille,

And pleye at dees right at oure owene
wille.’

And thus acorded been thise shrewés
tweye,

To sleen the thridde, as ye han herd me
seye.

This yongeste, which that wente unto
the toun,

Ful ofte in herte he rolleth up and doun
The beautee of thise floryns newe and
bryghte;

‘O Lord,’ quod he, ‘if so were that I
myghte 840

I have al this tresor to my self allone,
Ther is no man that lyveth under the
trone

Of God, that sholdé lyve so murye as I!’
And atté laste the feend, oure enemy,
Putte in his thought that he sholde poyson
beye,

With which he myghté sleen his felawes
tweye;

For-why the feend foond hym in swich
lyvyngé,

That he hadde levé hym to sorwé brynge,
For this was outrély his fulle entente
To sleen hem bothe and never to repente.
And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he
tarie, 851

Into the toun, unto a pothecarie,
And preyldé hym that he hym woldé selle
Som poyssoun, that he myghte his rattés
quelle;

And cek ther was a polcat in his hawe,
That, as he seyde, his capouns hadde
y-slawe,

And fayn he woldè wreke hym, if he
myghte,
On vermyn, that destroyed hym by
nyghte.

The pothecarie answerde, 'And thou
shalt have

A thyng that, al so God my soulè save !
In al this world ther nis no créature, 861
That eten or dronken hath of this con-
fiture,

Noght but the montance of a corn of
whete,

That he ne shal his lif anon forlete ;
Ye, sterve he shal, and that in lassè while
Thanthou wolt goon a-paas nat but a mile ;
This poysoun is so strong and violent.'

This cursèd man hath in his hond y-
hent

This poysoun in a box, and sith he ran
Into the nextè strete unto a man, 870
And borwèd hym largè botellès thre,
And in the two his poysoun pourèd he ;
The thridde he kepte clene for his owenè
drynke ;

For al the nyght he shoope hym for to
swynke

In cariynge of the gold out of that place.
And whan this riotour with sory grace
Hadde filled with wyn hys gretè botels thre,
To his felawes agayn repaireth he.

What nedeth it to sermone of it moore ?
For right as they hadde cast his deeth
bifoore, 880

Right so they han hym slayn, and that
anon,

And whan that this was doon thus spak
that oon :

'Now lat us sitte and drynke, and make
us merie,

And afterward we wol his body berie' ;
And with that word it happèd hym,
par cas,

To take the botel ther the poysoun was,
And drank and yaf his felawe drynke also,
For which anon they storven bothè two.

But certès, I suppose that Avycen
Wroot never in no Canon, ne in no fen,
Mo wonder signès of empoisonyng 891

^{890.} *fen*, the Arabic name of the sections of
Avicenna's Canon.

Than hadde thise wrecches two, er hir
endyng.

Thus ended ben thise homycidès two,
And eek the false empoysonere also.

O cursèd synne of allè cursèdnesse !
O traytorous homycide ! O wikkednesse !
O glotonye, luxurie, and hasardrye !
Thou blasphemour of Crist with vileynye,
And othès grete, of usage and of pride !
Allas ! mankyndè, how may it bitide 900
That to thy Créatour which that thee
wroghte,

And with his precious hertè-blood thee
boghte,

Thou art so fals and so unkynde, alas !

Now, goode men, God foryeve yow
youre trespas,

And ware yow fro the synne of avarice.
Myn hooly pardoun may yow alle warice,
So that ye offre nobles, or sterlynges,
Or ellès silver broches, spoonès, rynges.
Boweth youre heed under this hooly bulle !
Cometh up, ye wyvès, offreth of youre
wolle ! 910

Your names I entre heer in my rolle anon ;
Into the blisse of hevene shul ye gon ;
I yow assoillè by myn heigh power,—
Yow that wol offre,—as clene and eek as
cleer

As ye were born ; and lo, sires, thus I
preche,

And Jhesu Crist, that is oure soulès leche,
So grauntè yow his pardoun to receyve ;
For that is best ; I wol yow nat deceyve.

'But, sires, o word forgat I in my tale ;
I have relikes and pardoun in my male
As faire as any man in Engelond, 921
Whiche were me yeven by the popès hond.
If any of yow wole of devocioun
Offren, and han myn absolucioun,
Com forth anon, and kneleth heere adoun,
And mekely receyveh my pardoun ;
Or ellès taketh pardoun as ye wende,
Al newe and fressh at every milès ende,—
So that ye offren, alwey newe and newe,
Nobles or pens, whiche that be goode
and trewe. 930

It is an honour to everich that is heer

That ye mowe have a suffisant Pardoneer
 Tassoillé yow in contree as ye ryde,
 For aventúres whiche that may bityde.
 Paraventure ther may fallen oon or two
 Doun of his hors and breke his nekke atwo;
 Looke which a seuretee is it to yow alle,
 That I am in youre felaweshipe y-falle,
 That may assoillé yow, bothe moore and
 lasse,

Whan that the soule shal fro the body
 passe. 940

I redé that oure Hoost heere shal bigynne,
 For he is moost envoluped in synne!
 Com forth, sire Hoost, and offré first anon,
 And thou shalt kisse my relikes every-
 chon,—

Ye, for a grole! Unbokele anon thy purs.'

'Nay, nay,' quod he, 'thanne have I
 Cristés curs!

Lat be,' quod he, 'it shal nat be, so theech!
 Thou woldest make me kisse thyn oldé
 breech,

And swere it were a relyk of a seint,
 Though it were with thy fundément
 depeint; 950

But, by the croys which that Seint
 Eleyne fond,

935. *fallen, H⁶ falle.* 951. *Eleyne, Helena.*

I wolde I hadde thy coillons in myn hond
 Instide of relikes, or of seintuarie.

Lat kutte hem of, I wol thee helpe hem
 carie,

They shul be shryned in an hogges toord.'

This Pardoner answerd nat a word;
 So wrooth he was no word ne wolde he
 seye.

'Now,' quod oure Hoost, 'I wol no
 lenger pleye

With thee, ne with noon oother angry
 man.'

But right anon the worthy Knyght
 bigan,— 960

Whan that he saugh that al the peple
 lough,—

'Namooore of this, for it is right
 ynough!

Sire Pardoner, be glad and myrie of
 cheere;

And ye, sire Hoost, that been to me so
 deere,

I prey yow that ye kisse the Pardoner;
 And Pardoner, I prey thee drawe thee
 neer,

And as we diden, lat us laughe and pleye.'
 Anon they kiste and ryden forth hir weye.

'

GROUP D

The Prologue of the Wyves Tale of Bathe

'EXPERIENCE, though noon auctoritee
 Were in this world, were right ynogh to me
 To speke of wo that is in mariage;
 For, lordynges, sith I twelf yeer was
 of age,—

Y-thonked be God, that is eterne on lyve!
 I housbondes at chirché dore I have had
 fyve;

For I so ofté have y-wedded bec;

GROUP D. In the Ellesmere MS. this group follows the Man of Law's Tale, but the mention of Sittingbourne (l. 847) shows that it must come after the Monk's Tale with its reference to Rochester.

6. *at chirche dore*, where the first part of the marriage service used to be read.

And alle were worthy men in hir degree.
 But me was toold certeyn, nat longe
 agoon is,

That sith that Crist ne wente never but
 onis 10

To weddyng, in the Cane of Galilee,
 By the same ensample taughte he me
 That I ne sholdé wedded be but ones.

Herkne, eek, which a sharpe word for
 the nones,

Beside a wellé Jhesus, God and man,

13. Against this line E has the note, 'Qui enim semel ivit ad nupcias docuit semel esse nubendum,' a quotation from St. Jeronim, *Adversus Jovinianum*, a treatise in favour of chastity, some of the arguments in which the Wife of Bath from here to line 128 takes up and inverts or combats.

Spak in repreeve of the Samaritan :
 "Thou hast y-had fyve housbondes," quod
 he,
 "And that ilk man the which that hath
 now thee
 Is noght thyn housbonde"; thus seyde
 he certeyn.
 What that he mente therby, I kan nat
 seyn ; 20
 But that I axè, why the fifthè man
 Was noon housbonde to the Samaritan ?
 How manye myghte she have in mariage ?
 Yet herde I never tellen, in myn age,
 Upon this nombrè diffinicioun.
 Men maydevyne, and glosen up and doun,
 But wel I woot, expres, withoute lye,
 God bad us for to wexe and multiplie ;
 That gentil text kan I wel understonde.
 Eek, wel I woot, he seyde myn housbonde
 Sholde letè fader and mooder, and takè
 me ; 31
 But of no nombrè mencionioun made he,
 Of bigamy, or of octogamy ;
 Why sholdè men speke of it vileynye.
 'Lo, heere the wisè kyng daun
 Salomon ;
 I trowe he haddè wyves mo than oon ;
 As, woldè God, it leveful were to me
 To be refresshèd half so ofte as he !
 Which yifte of God hadde he for alle his
 wyvys !
 No man hath swich that in this world
 alyve is. 40
 God woot, this noble kyng, as to my wit,
 The firstè nyght had many a myrie fit
 With ech of hem, so wel was hym on lyve.
 'Y-blessed be God, that I have wedded
 fyve !
 Welcome the sixtè, whan that ever he shal,
 For sothe I wol nat kepe me chaast in al.
 Whan myn housbonde is fro the world
 y-gon,
 Som cristen man shal weddè me anon ;
 For thanne, thapostle seith, I am free
 To wedde, a Goddes half, where it liketh
 me. 50
 He seith to be wedded is no synne ;
 "Bét is to be wedded than to brynne."

50. *a Goddes half*, on God's part, *i.e.* with His consent.

What rekketh me thogh folk seye vileynye
 Of shrewéd Lameth, and his bigamy ?
 I woot wel Abraham was an hooly man,
 And Jacob eek, as ferforth as I kan,
 And ech of hem hadde wyvès mo than two,
 And many another holy man also.
 Whanne saugh ye ever in any manere age
 That hye God defended mariage 60
 By expres word ? I pray you telleth me ;
 Or where comanded he virginitee ?
 I woot as wel as ye, it is no drede,
 Thapostel whan he speketh of mayden-
 hede,
 He seyde that precept ther-of hadde he
 noon.
 Men may conseilte a womman to been
 oon,
 But conseillyng is nat comandement.
 He putte it in oure owene juggement ;
 For haddè God comanded maydenhede
 Thanne hadde he dampnèd weddyng with
 the dede ; 70
 And certein, if ther were no seed y-sowe,
 Virginitee, wher-of thannesholde it growe ?
 Poul dorste nat comanden, attè leeste,
 A thyng of which his maister yaf noon
 heeste.
 The dart is set up of virginitee,
 Cacche who so may, who renneth best
 lat see !
 'But this word is nat taken of every
 wight,
 But ther as God lust yive it of his myght.
 I woot wel that the Apostel was a mayde,
 But nathèlees, thogh that he wroot and
 sayde 80
 He wolde that every wight were swich
 as he,
 Al nys but conseil to virginitee ;
 And for to been a wyf he yaf me leve
 Of indulgence, so it is no repreve
 To weddè me, if that my makè dye,
 Withouten excepcioun of bigamy,
 Al were it good no womman for to
 touche,—
 He mente as in his bed or in his couche ;
 For peril is bothe fyr and tow tassemble ;
 Ye knowe what this ensample may
 resemble. 90
 This is al and som, he helde virginitee

Moore profiteth than weddyng in freletee ;
 Freelte clepe I, but if that he and she
 Wolde leden al hir lyf in chastitee.

‘ I graunte it wel I have noon envie
 Thogh maydenhede preferre bigamy :
 Hem liketh to be clené, body and goost.
 Of myn estaat I nyl nat make no boost,
 For wel ye knowe a lord in his houshold
 He nath nat every vessel al of gold ; 100
 Somme been of tree, and doon hir
 lord servyse.

God clepeth folk to hym in sondry wyse,
 And everich hath of God a propre yifte,
 Som this, som that, as hym liketh to
 shifte.

‘ Virginitee is greet perfeccioun,
 And continence eek, with devocioun :
 But Crist, that of perfeccioun is wellé,
 Bád nat every wight sholdé go selle
 All that he hadde and yive it to the poore,
 And in swich wisé folwe hym and his foore.
 He spak to hem that wolde lyve parfitly,
 And, lordynges, by youre leve, that am
 nat I.

I wol bistowe the flour of al myn age
 In the actés and in fruyt of mariage.

‘ Telle me also, to what conclusioun
 Were membres maad of generacioun,
 And for what profit was a wight
 y-wroght ?

Trusteth right wel, they were nat maad
 for noght.

Glose who so wole, and seye bothe up
 and down,

That they were makyd for purgacioun 120
 Of uryne, and oure bothé thyngés smale
 Were eek to knowe a femele from a male,
 And for noon oother causé,—sey ye no ?
 The experience woot wel it is noght so ;
 So that the clerkés be nat with me wrothe,
 I sey this, that they beth maked for bothe ;
 This is to seye, for office, and for ese
 Of engendrure, ther we nat God displese.
 Why sholde men ellés in hir bookés sette
 That man shal yeldé to his wyf hire dette ?
 Now wher-with sholde he make his
 paiement, 131

If he ne used his sely instrument ?
 Thanne were they maad upon a créature,

92. *profiteth*, H⁵ *parfit*.

To purge uryne and eek for engendrure.

‘ But I seye noght that every wight is
 holde,

That hath swich harneys as I to yow tolde,
 To goon and usen hem in engendrure,—
 Thanne shuld men take of chastitee no
 cure.

Crist was a mayde and shapen as a man,
 And many a seint sith that the world
 bigan, 140

Yet lyved they ever in parfit chastitee.

I nyl nat envye no virginitee ;
 Lat hem be breed of puré wheté seed,
 And lat us wyvés hoten barly breed,
 And yet with barly breed Mark tellé kan
 Oure Lord Jhesu refresshéd many a man.

‘ In swich estaat as God hath clepéd us,
 I wol persévère, I nam nat precius ;
 In wyfhode I wol use myn instrument
 As frely as my Makere hath it sent. 150
 If I be daungerous, God yeve me sorwe ;
 Myn housbonde shal it have bothe eve
 and morwe,

Whan that hym list com forth and paye
 his dette.

An housbonde I wol have, I nyl nat lette,
 Which shal be bothe my dettour and my
 thral,

And have his tribulacioun withal
 Upon his flessch, whil that I am his wyf.
 I have the power, duryng al my lyf,
 Upon his propre body, and noght he.

Right thus the Apostel tolde it unto me, 160
 And bad oure housbondes for to love us
 weel ;

Al this sentence me liketh every deel.’

Up stirte the Pardoner, and that anon ;
 ‘ Now, dame,’ quod he, ‘ by God and
 by Seint John !

Ye been a noble prechour in this cas.

I was aboute to wedde a wyf, allas !

What, sholde I bye it on my flessch so
 deere ?

Yet hadde I lever weddeno wyf to-yeere !’

‘ Abyde,’ quod she, ‘ my tale is nat
 bigonne. 169

Nay, thou shalt drynken of another tonne
 Er that I go, shal savoure wors than ale ;
 And whan that I have toold thee forth
 my tale

Of tribulacioun in mariage,
Of which I am expert in al myn age,—
This to seyn, my self have been the
whippe,—

Than maystow chesè wheither thou wolte
sippe

Of thilké tonnè that I shal abroche.
Be war of it, er thou to ny approche,
For I shal tell ensamples mo than ten,
“Whoso that nyl be war by othere men, 180
By hym shul othere men corrected be”;
The samè wordes writeth Ptholomee;
Rede in his Almageste and take it there.’

‘Dame, I wolde praye yow, if youre
wyl it were,’

Seydè this Pardoner, ‘as ye bigan
Telle forth youre talé; spareth for no man,
And teché us yongé men of youre prak-
tike.’

‘Gládly, sirès, sith it may yow like;
But yet I praye to al this compaignye,
If that I speke after my fantasye, 190
As taketh not agrief of that I seye,
For myn entente is nought but for to
pleye.

‘Now, sire, now wol I tellè forth my
tale.

As ever moote I drynken wyn or ale,
I shal seye sooth, of housbondes that I
hadde,

As thre of hem were goode, and two
were badde.

The thre were goodè men and riche, and
olde;

Unnethè myghtè they the statut holde
In which that they were bounden unto me;
Ye woot wel what I meene of this, *pardee*!
As help me God, I laughè whan I thyнке
How pitously a-nyght I made hem swynke!
And, by my fey, I tolde of it no stoor;
They had me yiven hir lond and hir
tresoor,

Me neded nat do lenger diligence
To wynne hir love, or doon hem rever-
ence;

They lovèd me so wel, by God above,

182. *Ptholomee*. No one has yet verified the references to the Almagest here and in l. 324.

188. *sirès*, H⁵ *quod sche*.

204. *lond*, E *gold*.

That I ne tolde no deyntee of hir love!
A wys womman wol sette hire, ever in
oon, 209

To gete hire lovè ther as she hath noon;
But sith I hadde hem hoolly in myn hond,
And sith they hadde me yeven all hir lond,
What sholde I taken heede hem for to
plese,

But it were for my profit and myn ese?
I sette hem so a werkè, by my fey,
That many a nyght they songen “weil-
away!”

The bacoun was nat fet for hem, I trowe,
That som men han in Essex at Dun-
mowe. 218

I governed hem so wel after my lawe,
That ech of hem ful blisful was and fawe
To brynge me gayè thynges fro the fayre;
They were ful glad whan I spak to hem
faire,

For, God it woot, I chidde hem spitously.

‘Now herkneth how I baar me pro-
prely,

Ye wisè wyvès that kan understonde.

‘Thus shul ye speke, and beren hem
on honde;

For half so boldely kan ther no man
Swere and lyè as a womman kan.

I sey nat this by wyvès that been wyse,
But if it be whan they hem mysavysse. 230
I-wis a wyf, if that she kan hir good,
Shal berè hym on hond the cow is wood,
And takè witnessè of hir owene mayde
Of hir assent; but herkneth how I sayde.

‘Sire, oldè *kaynard*, is this thyn array?
Why is my neighèborès wyf so gay?
She is honoured over al ther she gooth;
I sitte at hoom, I have no thrifty clooth.
What dostow at my neighèborès hous?
Is she so fair? artow so amorous? 240
What rowne ye with oure mayde? *Bene-
dicite*!

209. *sette*, H⁵ *bisy*.

218. *Dunmowe*. The Dunmow sitch is still given as a prize to a husband and wife who have never quarrelled.

232. *cow*, chough or jackdaw, the reference being to a tale like the Manciple’s.

235. From here to l. 315 Chaucer takes his text from a fragment of Theophrastus, *De Nuptiis*, preserved in §§ 313, 314 of St. Jerome’s treatise against Jovinian.

Sire, oldé lecchour, lat thy japés be !
 And if I have a gossib or a freend,
 Withouten gilt thou chidest as a feend,
 If that I walke or pleye unto his hous.
 Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous
 And prechest on thy bench with yvel
 preef :

Thou seist to me it is a greet meschief
 To wedde a pouré womman for costage ;
 And if she be riche and of heigh parage, ²⁵⁰
 Thanne seistow it is a tormentrie
 To suffre hire pride and hire malencolie ;
 And if that she be faire, thou verray
 knave,

Thou seyst that every holour wol hire
 have ;

She may no while in chastitee abyde
 That is assailléd upon eché syde.

‘Thou seyst som folk desire us for
 richesse,
 Somme for oure shapé, somme for oure
 fairnesse,

And som for she kan either synge or
 daunce,

And som for gentillesse, and daliaunce,
 Som for hir handés, and hir armés
 smale,— ²⁶¹

Thus goth al to the devel by thy tale !

Thou seyst men may nat kepe a castel wal,
 It may so longe assailléd been over al.

‘And if that she be foul, thou seist
 that she

Coveiteth every man that she may se,
 For as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe,
 Til that she fyndé som man hire to chepe ;
 Ne noon so grey a goos gooth in the lake,
 As, seistow, wol been withouté make ; ²⁷⁰
 And seyst it is an hard thyng for to welde
 A thyng that no man wole, his thankés,
 helde.

Thus seistow, lorel, whan thou goost to
 bedde,

And that no wys man nedeth for to wedde,
 Ne no man that entendeth unto hevene.
 With wildé thonder dynt and firy levenc
 Mooté thy welkéd nekké be to-broke !

‘Thow seyst that droppying houses,
 and eek smoke,

And chiding wyvés, maken men to flee
 Out of hir owene hous, a ! *benedicitee* ! ²⁸⁰

What eyleth swich an old man for to
 chide ?

‘Thow seyst we wyvés wol oure vices
 hide

Til we be fast, and thanne we wol hem
 shewe,—

Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe.

‘Thou seist that oxen, asses, hors, and
 houndes,

They been assayéd at diversé stoundes ;
 Basyns, labourés, er that men hem bye,
 Spoonés and stooles, and al swich hous-
 bondrye,

And so been pottés, clothés, and array ;
 But folk of wyvés maken noon assay ²⁹⁰

Til they be wedded,—oldé dotard shrewe !
 Thanne, seistow, we wol oure vices shewe.

‘Thou seist also that it displeseth me
 But if that thou wolt preysé my beautee,
 And but thou poure alwey upon my face,
 And clepe me “fairé dame” in every
 place ;

And but thou make a feeste on thilké day
 That I was born, and make me fressh
 and gay ;

And but thou do to my norice honour,
 And to my chamberere withinne my
 bour, ³⁰⁰

And to my fadrés folk and his allyes,—
 Thus seistow, oldé bareful of lyes !

‘And yet of oure apprentice Janékyn,
 For his crispe heer, shynynge as gold so
 fyn,

And for he squiereth me bothe up and
 down,

Yet hastow caught a fals suspecion,—
 I wol hym noght, thogh thou were deed
 to-morwe !

‘But tel me this, why hydestow with
 sorwe

The keyés of thy cheste, away fro me ?

It is my good, as wel as thyn, *pardée* !

What ! wenestow make an ydiot of oure
 dame ? ³¹¹

Now, by that lord that calléd is Seint
 Jame,

Thou shalt nat bothé, thogh thou weré
 wood,

Be maister of my body, and of my
 good ;

That oon thou shalt forgo, maugree thyne
eyen !

What nedeth thee of me to enquire or
spyen ?

I trowe thou woldest loke me in thy
chiste ;

Thou sholdest seyè, " Wyf, go wher thee
liste ;

Taak youre disport, I wol nat leve no
talys ;

I knowe yow for a trewè wyf, dame Alys."
We love no man that taketh kepe, or

charge, ³²¹
Wher that we goon ; we wol ben at our
large.

'Of allè men y-blessed moot he be,
The wise astrologien, Daun Ptholome,
That seith this proverbe in his Almageste,
"Of allè men his wysdom is the hyste
That rekketh never who hath the world
in honde."

By this proverbè thou shalt understonde,
Have thou ynogh, what thar thee recche
or care

How myrily that othere folkès fare ? ³³⁰
For certeyn, oldè dotard, by youre leve,
Ye shul have queyntè right ynogh at eve.
He is to greet a nygard that wolde werne
A man to lighte his candle at his lanterne.
He shal have never the lassè light, *pardee!*
Have thou ynogh, thee thar nat pleynè
thee.

'Thou seyst also, that if we make us
gay

With clothyng, and with precïous array,
That it is peril of oure chastitee ;

And yet with sorwe thou most enforcè
thee, ³⁴⁰

And seye thisse wordès in the Apostles
name :

"In habit maad with chastitee and shame,
Ye wommen shul apparaille yow," quod
he,

"And noght in tressèd heer, and gay
perrec,

As perlès, ne with gold, ne clothès riche."
After thy text, ne after thy rubriche,

I wol nat wirche as muchel as a gnat.
Thou seydest this, that I was lyk a cat ;

For whoso woldè senge a cattès skyn,

Thanne wolde the cat wel dwellen in his
in ; ³⁵⁰

And if the cattès skyn be slyk and gay,
She wol nat dwelle in housè half a day ;
But forth she wole, er any day be dawed,
To shewe hir skyn, and goon a-cater-
wawed ;

This is to seye, if I be gay, sire shrewe,
I wol renne out my borel for to shewe.

'Sire, oldè fool, what eyleth thee to
spyen ?

Thogh thou preye Argus with his
hundred eyen

To be my wardécors, as he kan best,
In feith, he shal nat kepe me but me
lest ; ³⁶⁰

Yet koude I make his berd, so moot I
thee !

'Thou seydest eek, that ther been
thyngès thre

The whichè thyngès troublen al this erthe,
And that no wight ne may endure the
ferthe.

O leewe sire shrewè, Jhesu shorte thy lyf !
Yet prechestow and seyst an hateful wyf
Y-rekened is for oon of these meschances.
Been ther none othere of thy resemblances
That ye may likne youre parables unto,
But if a sely wyf be oon of tho ? ³⁷⁰

'Thou likenest wommenès love to
helle,

To bareyne lond, ther water may nat
dwelle ;

Thou liknest it also to wildè fyr,
The moore it brenneth the moore it hath
desir

To consumen every thyng that brent wole
be ;

Thou seyst, right as wormès shende a tree,
Right so a wyf destroyeth hire housbond
This knowè they that been to wyvès
bonde.'

Lordynges, right thus as ye have
understonde

Baar I stifly myne olde housbondes on
honde, ³⁸⁰

That thus they seyden in hir dronkenesse ;
And al was fals, but that I took wisesse

357. *eyleth*, H⁵ *helpith*.

361. *make his berd*, cheat him.

On Janékyn, and on my nece also.
 O Lord, the peyne I dide hem and the wo!
 Ful giltéles, by Goddés sweeté pyne!
 For as an hors I koudé byte and whyne;
 I koudé pleyne, thogh I wére in the gilt,
 Or ellés often tyme hadde I been spilt.
 'Who so first cometh to the mille first
 gryn't';

I pleynéd first, so was oure werre y-stynt;
 They were ful glad to excusen hem ful
 blyve 391
 Of thyng of which they never agilte hir
 lyve.

Of wenches wolde I beren hem on
 honde,
 Whan that for syk unnethés myghte thay
 stonde;
 Yet tikled it his herté, for that he
 Wende that I hadde of hym so greet
 chiertee!

I swoor that al my walkynge out by
 nyghte

Was for tespyé wenches that he dighte.
 Under that colour hadde I many a myrthe,
 For al swich witte is yeven us in oure
 byrthe,— 400

Deceité, bypyng, spyynyng, God hath
 yive

To wommen kyndely whil they may lyve;
 And thus of o thyng I avaunté me,
 Atte ende I hadde the better in ech de-
 gree,—

By sleighte, or force, or by som maner
 thyng,

As by continueel murmure or grucchyng.
 Namely abeddé hadden they meschaunce;
 Ther wolde I chide and do hem no
 plesaunce;

I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde,
 If that I felte his arm over my syde, 410
 Til he had maad his raounsoun unto me;
 Thanne wolde I suffre hym do his
 nycetee;

And therefore every man this tale I telle,—
 Wynne who so may, for al is for to selle;
 With empty hand men may none haukés
 lure.

For wynnyng wolde I al his lust endure

389. From H; Heng.⁴ *Whoso that first to
 mylle comth first gryn't.*

And maké me a feynéd appetit,
 And yet in bacoun hadde I never delit;
 That madé me that ever I wolde hem
 chide;

For thogh the pope hadde seten hem
 biside 420

I wolde nat spare hem at hir owene bord,
 For, by my trouthe, I quitte hem word
 for word.

As helpe me verray God omnipotent,
 Thogh I right now sholde make my
 testament,

I ne owe hem nat a word that it nys quit.
 I broghte it so abouté by my wit

That they moste yeve it up as for the
 beste,

Or ellés hadde we never been in reste;
 For thogh he lookéd as a wood leoun,
 Yet sholde he faille of his conclusioun.

Thanne wolde I seye, 'Goodé lief,
 taak keepe,— 431

How mekely looketh Wilkyn, ouré
 sheepe!

Com neer, my spousé, lat me ba thy
 cheke;

Ye sholdé been al pacient and meke,
 And han a sweeté, spicéd conscience,
 Sith ye so preche of Jobés pacience.

Suffreth alwey, syn ye so wel kan preche,
 And, but ye do, certein we shal yow
 teche

That it is fair to have a wyf in pees.
 Oon of us two moste bowen, doutéles,
 And sith a man is mooré resonable 441

Than womman is, ye mosté been suffrable.
 What eyleth yow to grucché thus and
 grone?

Is it for ye woldé have my queynte allone?
 Wy, taak it al! lo, have it every deel!

Peter! I shrewe yow, but ye love it
 weel;

For if I woldé selle my belé chose
 I koudé walke as fressh as is a rose;

But I wol kepe it for youre owene tooth.
 Ye be to blame, by God! I sey yow sooth.'

Swiche manere wordés haddé we on
 honde. 451

Now wol I spoken of my fourthe
 housbonde.

My fourthé housbonde was a revelour;

This is to seyn, he hadde a paramour ;
 And I was yong and ful of ragerye,
 Stibourne and strong and joly as a pyc.
 Wel koude I dauncè to an harpè smale,
 And synge, y-wis, as any nyghtyngale,
 Whan I had dronke a draughte of sweetè
 wyn.

Metellius, the foulè cherl, the swyn ! 460
 That with a staf birafte his wyf hire lyf,
 For she drank wyn ; thogh I hadde been
 his wyf

He sholdè nat han daunted me fro drynke !
 And after wyn on Venus moste I thynke,
 For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,
 A likerous mouth moste han a likerous tayl.
 In women vinolent is no defence,—
 This knowen lechours by experience.

But, Lord Crist ! whan that it remem-
 breth me

Upon my yowthe, and on my jolitee, 470
 It tikleth me aboute myn hertè roote !
 Unto this day it dooth myn hertè boote
 That I have had my world, as in my tyme.
 But Age, alas ! that al wole envenyme,
 Hath me biraft my beautee and my pith,—
 Lat go, fare wel, the devel go therwith !
 The flour is goon, ther is namoore to telle,
 The bren, as I best kan, now moste I selle ;
 But yet to be right myrie wol I fonde.
 Now wol I tellen of my fourthe housbonde.

I seye I hadde in hertè greet despit 481
 That he of any oother had delit ;
 But he was quit, by God, and by Seint
 Joce !

I made hym of the samè wode a croce.
 Nat of my body in no foul manere,
 But certainly I madè folk swich cheere,
 That in his owene grece I made hym frye
 For angre, and for verray jealousye.
 By God, in erthe I was his purgatorie,
 For which I hope his soulè beinglorie ! 490
 For God it woot, he sat ful ofte and song
 Whan that his shoo ful bitterly hym wrong.
 Ther was no wight save God and he that
 wiste

In many wise how soorè I hym twistè.

460. *Metellius*. The story is from Valerius Maximus, Bk. vi. ch. 3.

483. *Seint Joce*, Saint Jodocus, a Breton hermit of the 7th century.

He deyde whan I cam fro Jerusalem,
 And lith y-grave under the roodè beam,
 Al is his tombè noght so curys
 As was the sepulcre of hym Daryus,
 Which that Appelles wroughtè subtilly ;
 It nys but wast to burye hym preciously. 500
 Lat hym fare wel, God yeve his soulè reste,
 He is now in his grave and in his cheste !

Now of my fifthè housbonde wol I telle.
 God lete his soulè never come in helle !
 And yet was he to me the moostè shrewe ;
 That feele I on my ribbes al by rewe,
 And ever shal, unto myn endyng day ;
 But in oure bed he was so fressh and gay ;
 And therwithal so wel koude he me glose,
 Whan that he woldè han my belè chose,
 That thogh he hadde me bet on every bon,
 He koudè wynne agayn my love anon.
 I trowe I loved hym bestè for that he
 Was of his lovè daungerous to me.

We women han, if that I shal nat lye,
 In this matere a queyntè fantasye ;
 Waytè ! what thyng we may nat lightly
 have

Ther-after wol we crie al day and crave.
 Forbode us thyng, and that desiren we ;
 Presse on us faste and thannè wol we fle.
 With daunger outè we al oure chaffare ; 521
 Greet prees at market maketh deerè ware,
 And to greet cheepe is holde at litel prys ;
 This knoweth every womman that is wys.

My fifthè housbonde, God his soulè
 blesse !

Which that I took for love, and no
 richesse,

He somtyme was a clerk of Oxenford,
 And hadde left scole and wente at hom
 to bord

With my gossib, dwellynge in oure toun ;
 God have hir soule, hir name was Alisoun.
 She knew my herte, and eek my privètee,
 Bet than oure parisshe preest, as moot
 I thee.

To hire biwreyèd I my conseil al,
 For hadde myn housbonde pissèd on a
 wal,

498. *Daryus*. The tomb which Apelles wrought for Darius by Alexander's order is described in the 6th book of the *Alexandreis* of Gualtier de Lille.

Or doon a thyng that sholde han cost his
lyf,

To hire, and to another worthy wyf,
And to my nece, which that I lovéd weel,
I wolde han toold his conseil every deel ;
And so I dide ful often, God it woot,
That made his face ful often reed and hoot
For verray shame, and blamed hymself,
for he 541

Had toold to me so greet a pryvctee.

And so bifel that onés in a Lente,
So often tymes I to my gossyb wente,—
For ever yet I lovéd to be gay,
And for to walke in March, Averill and
May,

Fro hous to hous to heere sondry talys,—
That Jankyn clerk, and my gossyb dame
Alys

And I myself into the feeldés wente.

Myn housbonde was at London al that
Lente ; 550

I hadde the better leyser for to pleye,
And for to se, and eek for to be seye
Of lusty folk. What wiste I wher my
grace

Was shapen for to be, or in what place ?
Therefore I made my visitaciouns
To vigilies and to processiouns,
To prechyng eek, and to thise pilgrimages,
To pleyes of myracles, and to mariages,
And wered upon my gayé scarlet gytes.
These wormes, ne these motthes, ne these
mytes, 560

Upon my peril frete hem never a deel.
And wostow why ? For they were used
weel.

Now wol I tellen forth what happéd me.
I seye that in the feeldés walked we,
Till trewely we hadde swich daliance,
This clerk and I, that of my purveiance
I spak to hym, and seyde hym how that he,
If I were wydwe, sholdé weddè me ;
For certainly,—I sey for no bobance,—
Yet was I never withouten purveiance
Of mariage, nof othere thyngs eek. 571
I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek
That hath but oon hole for to stert to,
And if that faille, thanne is al y-do.

I bar hym on honde he hadde enchanted
me,—

My damé taughté me that soutiltee,—
And eek I seyde, I mette of hym al nyght,
He wolde han slayn me as I lay up right,
And al my bed was ful of verray blood ;
But yet I hope that he shal domegood, 580
For blood bitokeneth gold, as me was
taught ;

And al was fals, I dremed of it right
naught,

Bút I folwed ay my damés loore,
As wel of this as of othere thyngs moore.

But now, sire,—lat me se,—what I
shal seyn ?

A ha ! by God, I have my tale ageyn.

Whan that my fourthé housbonde was
on beere

I wepte algate and madé sory cheere,
As wyvés mooten, for it is usage,
And with my coverchief covered my
visage ; 590

But, for that I was purveyed of a make,
I wepte but smal, and that I undertake !

To chirche was myn housbonde born
a-morwe

With neighébore, that for hym maden
sorwe,

And Jankyn, ouré clerk, was oon of tho.
As help me God, whan that I saugh hymgo
After the beere, me thoughte he hadde a
paire

Of legges and of feet so clene and faire,
That al myn herte I yaf unto his hoold.

He was, I trowe, a twenty wynter oold, 600
And I was fourty, if I shal seye sooth ;
But yet I hadde alwey a coltès tooth.

Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me weel,
I hadde the prente of seinté Venus seel.
As help me God, I was a lusty oon,
And faire and riche, and yong, and wel
bigon,

And trewely, as myn housbondes toldé me,
I hadde the beste quonyam myghté be ;
For certés, I am al Venerien 609
In feelyng, and myn herte is Marcien ;
Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnesse,
And Mars yaf me my sturdy hardynesse.
Myn áscendent was Taur and Mars
therinne ;

Allas, alas ! that ever love was synne !
I folwed ay myn inclinacioun

By vertu of my constellacioun,
That madé me I koudé noght withdrawe
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe.
Yet have I Martés mark upon my face,
And also in another, privee, place, 620
For God so wys be my savacioun,
I ne loved never by no discrecioun,
But ever folwedé myn appetit,—
Al were he short, or long, or blak, or whit ;
I took no kepe, so that he likéd me,
How poore he was, ne cek of what degree.

What sholde I seye, but at the monthés
ende

This joly clerk, Jankyn, that was so hende,
Hath wedded me with greet solempnytee,
And to hym yaf I all the lond and fec,
That ever was me yeven ther-bifoore ; 631
But afterward repented me ful soore.
He noldé suffre nothyng of my list ;
By God, he smoot me onés, on the lyst,
For that I rente out of his book a leef,
That of the strook myn eré wex al deef.
Stibourne I was as is a leonesse,
And of my tonge a verray jangleresse ;
And walke I wolde, as I had doon biforn,
From hous to hous, although he had it
sworn ; 640

For which he often tymés woldé preche,
And me of oldé Romain geestés teche ;
How he, Symplicius Gallus, lefte his wyf,
And hire forsook for terme of al his lyf,
Noght but for open-heedid he hir say
Lokyng out at his dore upon a day.

Another Romain tolde he me by name,
That, for his wyf was at a someres game
Withouten his wityng, he forsook hire cke ;
And thanne wolde he upon his Bible seke
That ilké proverbe of Ecclesiaste, 651
Where he comandeth, and forbedeth faste,
Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule
aboute.

Thanne wolde he seye right thus, with-
outen doute :

*Whoso that buyldeth his hous al of salwes,
And priketh his blyndé hors over the falwes,
And suffreth his wyf to go seken halwes,
Is worthy to been hanged on the galwes ;*

642. *geestes*. These stories of Sulpicius Gallus and Sempronius Sophus are taken from Valerius Maximus (Bk. vi. ch. 3).

But al for noght, I setté noght an hawe
Of his proverbes, nof his oldé sawe ; 660
Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be.
I hate hym that my vices telleth me,
And so doo mo, God woot, of us than I.
This made hym with me wood al outrelly ;
I noldé noght forbere hym in no cas.

Now wol I seye yow sooth, by Seint
Thomas !

Why that I rente out of his book a leef,
For which he smoot me so that I was
deef.

He hadde a book that gladly, nyght
and day,

For his desport he woldé rede alway. 670
He clepéd it 'Valerie' and 'Theofraste,'
At whiché book he lough alway ful faste ;
And eek ther was som-tyme a clerk at
Rome,

A cardinal, that highté Seint Jerome,
That made a book agayn Jovinian,
In whiché book cek ther was Tertulan,
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowys,
That was abbessé nat fer fro Parys ;
And eek the Parables of Salomon,

Ovidés Art, and bookés many on ; 680
And allé thise were bounden in o volume ;
And every nyght and day was his custume,
Whan he hadde leyser and vacacioun
From oother worldly occupacioun,
To reden on this book of wikked wyves.

He knew of hem mo legendés and lyves
Than been of goodé wyvés in the Bible ;
For, trusteth wel, it is an impossible

That any clerk wol speké good of wyves,—
But if it be of hooly Seintés lyves,— 690
Ne of noon oother womman never the mo.
Who peyntedé the leoun ? Tel me who.
By God ! if women haddé writen stories,
As clerkés han withinne hire oratories,
They wolde han writen of men moore
wikkednesse

Than all the mark of Adam may redresse.
The children of Mercúrie and Venus

671. *Valerie*, i.e. Walter Map's *Epistola Valerii ad Rufinum de non ducenda uxore*

671. *Theofraste*. See note to l. 235.

676. *Tertulan*, perhaps Tertullian's treatise *De Exhortatione Castitatis*.

677. *Crisippus*, *Trotula*, not identified yet with any probability.

Been in hir wirkyng ful contrarius ;
 Mercúrie loveth wysdam and science,
 And Venus loveth ryot and dispence ; 700
 And for hire diverse disposicioun
 Each falleth in otheres exaltacioun ;
 And thus, God woot, Mercurie is desolat
 In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat ;
 And Venus falleth ther Mercurie is reysed ;
 Therefore no womman of no clerk is
 preysed.

The clerk whan he is oold, and may
 noght do

Of Venus werkës worth his oldë sho,
 Thanne sit he doun and writ in his dotage
 That wommen kan nat kepe hir mariage.

But now to purpos why I toldë thee 711
 That I was beten for a book, *pardee*.

Upon a nyght Jankyn, that was oure sire,
 Redde on his book, as he sat by the fire,
 Of Eva first, that for hir wikkednesse
 Was al mankyndë broght to wretched-
 nesse ;

For which that Jesus Crist hymself was
 slayn,

That boghte us with his hertë blood agayn.
 Lo, heere expres of womman may ye fynde,
 That womman was the los of al mankynde.

Tho redde he me how Sampson loste
 his heres ; 721

Slepynge, his lemman kitte it with hir
 sheres ;

Thurgh which tresoun loste he bothe his
 cyen.

Tho redde he me, if that I shal nat lych,
 Of Hercules and of his Dianyre,
 That causëd hym to sette hymself afyre.

No thyng forgat he the penaunce and wo
 That Socrates hadde with his wyvës two ;
 How Xantippa caste pisse upon his heed.
 This sely man sat stille as he were deed ;
 He wipëd his heed, namoorë dorste he
 seyn 731

But, 'Er that thonder styntë comth a
 reyn !'

Of Phasifpha, that was the queene of
 Crete,

708. *worth*, etc., H is not worth a scho.

717-20. Omitted in H⁶.

727. *penaunce*, from Pet.³ E² *sorwe*, H²
care.

733. *Phasifpha*, *Pasiphaë*.

For shrewednesse hym thoughte the talë
 swete.

Fy ! speke namoore ; it is a grisly thyng,
 Of hire horrible lust and hir likyng !

Of Clitermystra, for hire lecherye
 That falsly made hire housbonde for to
 dye ;

He redde it with ful good devocioun.

He tolde me eek for what occasioun 740
 Amphiorax at Thebës loste his lyf ;
 Myn housbonde hadde a legende of his
 wyf,

Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold
 Hath prively unto the Grekës told
 Wher that hir housbonde hidde hym in
 a place,

For which he hadde at Thebës sory grace.

Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucyë ;
 They bothë made hir housbondes for to
 dye,—

That oon for love, that oother was for hate.
 Lyma hir housbonde, upon an even late,
 Emplaysoned bath, for that she was his
 fo ;

Lucia likerous loved hire housbonde so,
 That, for he sholde alwey upon hire
 thyneke,

She yaf hym swich a manere lovë-drynke
 That he was deed, er it were by the
 morwe ;

And thus algatës housbondës han sorwe.

Thanne tolde he me how oon Latumyus
 Complayned, unto his felawe Arrius,
 That in his gardyn growëd swich a trec,
 On which, he seyde, how that his wyvës
 thre 760

Hangëd hymself for hertë despitus.

'O leevë brother,' quod this Arrius,
 'Yif me a plante of thilkë blissëd tree,
 And in my gardyn planted it shal be !'

Of latter date of wyvës hath he red,
 That somme han slayn hir housbondes in
 hir bed,

And lete hir lecchour dighte hire al the
 nyght,

743. *Eriphilem*, who betrayed Amphiarus to
 gain the necklace of Harmonia.

747. *Lyma*, an error for 'Livia. who poisoned
 Drusus; this instance and the next are taken
 from Map.

757. *Latumyus*. Map calls him Pacuvius.

Whil that the corps lay in the floor
upright ;

And somme han dryven naylès in hir brayn
Whil that they slepte, and thus they han
hem slayn. 770

Somme han hem yeven poysoun in hire
drynke ;

He spak moore harm than hertè may
bithynke ;

And therwithal he knew of mo proverbes,
Than in this world ther growen gras or
herbes.

'Bet is,' quod he, 'thyn habitacioun
Be with a leoun or a foul dragoun,
Than with a womman usynge for to
chyde.'

'Bet is,' quod he, 'hye in the roof abyde,
Than with an angry wyf down in the hous.'
They been so wikked and contrarious, 780
They haten that hir housbondes loven ay.
He seyde a womman cast hir shame away
Whan she cast of hir smok ; and forther
mo,

A fair womman, but she be chaast also,
Is lyk a gold ryng in a sow's nose.
Who woldè wenè, or who wolde suppose,
The wo that in myn hertè was, and pyne ?

And whan I saugh he woldè never fyne
To reden on this cursèd book al nyght,
Al sodeynly thre levès have I plyght 790
Out of his book, right as he radde, and eke
I with my fest so took hym on the cheke,
That in oure fyr he fil bakward adoun ;
And he up stirte as dooth a wood leoun,
And with his fest he smoot me on the
heed,

That in the floor I lay as I were deed ;
And whan he saugh how stillè that I lay,
He was agast and wolde han fled his way,
Til attè laste out of my swogh I breyle.
'O hastow slayn me, falsè thief?' I seyde ;
'And for my land thus hastow mordred
me ?' 801

Er I be deed, yet wol I kissè thee.'

And neer he cam, and kneléd faire
adoun,

And seyde, 'Deerè suster Alisoun !
As help me God, I shal thee never smyte.
That I have doon it is thyself to wyte ;
Foryeve it me, and that I thee biseke' ;

And yet, eft-soones, I hitte hym on the
cheke,

And seyde, 'Theef ! thus muchel am I
wreke. 809

Now wol I dye, I may no lenger speke.'
But attè laste, with muchel care and wo,
We fille acorded by us selven two.

He yaf me al the bridel in myn hond,
To han the governance of hous and lond,
And of his tonge, and of his hond also,
And made hym brenne his book anon
right tho ;

And whan that I hadde geten unto me
By maistrie al the soveraynètee,—
And that heseide, 'Myn owene trewè wyf,
Do as thee lust to terme of al thy lyf ; 820
Keepe thyn honour, and keepe eek myn
estaat,'—

After that day we hadden never debaat.
God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde
As any wyf from Denmark unto Ynde,
And also trewe, and so was he to me.
I prey to God, that sit in magestee,
So blesse his soulè for his mercy deere.
Now wol I seye my tale, if ye wol heere.

*Biholde the wordes bitwene the Somonour
and the Frere*

The Frere lough whan he hadde herd
al this ;

'Now, dame,' quod he, 'so have I joye
or blis, 830

This is a long preamble of a tale.'

And whan the Somonour herde the Frere
gale,

'Lo,' quod the Somonour, 'Goddès
armès two !

A frere wol entremette him ever-mo.

Lo, goodè men, a flye, and eek a frere,
Wol falle in every dysshè and matcere.
What spekestow of "preambulacioun" ?

What? amble, or trotte, or pees, or go
sit doun !

Thou letest oure disport in this manere.'

'Ye, woltow so, sire Somonour?' quod
the Frere ; 840

'Now, by my feith ! I shal, er that I go,

836. *and*, Corp.³ *and eek*, a clumsy device to
help out the line.

Telle of a somonour swich a tale or two
That alle the folk shal laughen in this
place.'

'Now ellés, Freré, I bishrewe thy face,'
Quod this Somonour, 'and I bishrewé me
But if I tellé talés, two or thre,
Of frerés, er I come to Sidyngborne,
That I shal make thyn herté for to morne,
For wel I woot thy pacience is gon.'

Oure Hoosté cridé, 'Pees! and that
anon'; 850
And seyde, 'Lat the womman telle hire
tale;

Ye fare as folk that dronken ben of ale.
Do, dame, telle forth youre tale, and
that is best.'

'Al redy, sire,' quod she, 'right as
yow lest;

If I have licence of this worthy Frere.'

'Yis, dame,' quod he, 'tel forth, and
I wol heere.'

WIFE OF BATH'S TALE

In tholdé dayés of the Kyng Arthour,
Of which that Britons speken greet
honour,

All was this land fulfild of fairye. 859

The elf queene with hir joly compaignye
Dauncéd ful ofte in many a grené mede.

This was the olde opinion as I rede,—
I speke of manye hundred yeres ago,—

But now kan no man se none elvès mo,
For now the grèté charitee and prayeres

Of lymytours, and othere hooly freres,
That serchen every lond and every stream,

As thikke as motés in the sonnè beem,—
Bléssyngé hallés, chambres, kichenes,

boures,
Citees, burghes, castels, hyé toures, 870

Thrópés, bernés, shipnes, daycryes,—
This maketh that ther been no fairyes;

For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the lymytour hymself,

847. *Sidyngborne*, Sittingbourne.

Wife of Bath's Tale. No original of this tale
is known. Tyrwhitt compares it to the story of
Florent in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, Bk. I.

867. *serchen*, H *sechen*.

In undermelés and in morwenynges,
And seyth his matyns and his hooly
thynges

As he gooth in his lymytacioun.

Wommen may go now sauffy up and doun;
In every bussh or under every tree,
Ther is noon oother incubus but he, 880
And he ne wol doon hem non dishonour.

And so bifel it that this kyngé, Arthour,
Hadde in his hous a lusty bachelor

That on a day cam ridyngé fro ryver,
And happéd that, allone as she was born,
He saugh a maydè walkyngé hym biforn,

Of whiché mayde, anon, maugree hir heed,
By verray force birafté hire maydenhed;

For which oppressioun was swich clamour,
And swich pursute unto the kyng Arthour,

That dampnéd was this knyght for to be
deed 891

By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his
heed,—

Paraventure swich was the statut tho,—
But that the queene and othere ladyes mo,

So longé preyçden the kyng of grace,
Til he his lyf hym graunted in the place,

And yaf hym to the queene al at hir wille
To chesé whether she wolde hym save
or spille.

The queene thanketh the kyng with al
hir myght, 899

And after this thus spak she to the knyght,
Whan that she saugh hir tyme upon a day:

'Thou standest yet,' quod she, 'in swich
array,

That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee.

I grante thee lyf, if thou kanst tellen me
What thyng is it that wommen moost

desiren,—

Be war, and keepe thy nekké-boon from
iren,—

And if thou kanst nat tellen it anon,

Yet shal I yeve thee levè for to gon

A twelf-month and a day, to seche and
leere

An answeré suffisant in this mateere; 910

And suretee wol I han, er that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place.'

878. *now*, om. EH4.

881. *non*, the reading of Camb. MS. only;
EH6 *but*, which is pointless.

Wo was this knyght, and sorwefully he
siketh ;

But what? he may nat do al as hym liketh,
And at the laste he chees hym for to
wende,

And come agayn right at the yerès ende,
With swich answer as God wolde hym
purveye,
And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth
his weye.

He seketh every hous and every place
Where as he hopeth for to fynde grace ⁹²⁰
To lerné what thyng wommen loven
moost ;

But he ne koude arryven in no coost
Wher as he myghte fynde in this mateere
Two créatürs accordyng in feere.

Somme seydè wommen loven best
richesse,

Somme seyde honóur, somme seydè joly-
nesse,

Somme riche array, somme seyden lust
abedde,

And ofté tymé to be wydwe and wédde.
Somme seyde that oure hertés been moost
cesed ⁹²⁹

Whan that we been y-flatered and y-pled.
He gooth ful ny the sothe, I wol nat
lye,—

A man shal wynne us best with flaterye ;
And with attendance and with bievnesse,
Been we y-lyméd, bothé moore and lesse.

And sommé seyen that we loven best
For to be free, and do right as us lest,
And that no man repreve us of oure vice,
But seye that we be wise and no-thing
nyce ;

For trewely ther is noon of us alle,
If any wight wol clawe us on the galle, ⁹⁴⁰
That we nyl kiké, for he seith us sooth.
Assay, and he shal fynde it that so dooth,
For, be we never so vicious with-inne,
We wol been holden wise and clene of
synne.

And sommé seyn that greet delit han we
For to been holden stable and eke secree,
And in o purpos stedefastly to dwelle,
And nat biwreyé thyng that men us telle ;
But that tale is nat worth a raké-stele.
Pardee, we wommen konné no thyng hele ;

Witnesse on Myda,—wol ye heere the
tale ? ⁹⁵¹

Ovyde, amongés othere thyngés smale,
Seyde Myda hadde under his longé heres,
Growyng upon his heed, two asses eres,
The whiché vice he hydde as he best
myghte,

Ful subtilly, from every mannés sighte,
That save his wyf ther wiste of it namo.
He loved hire moost, and trusted hire also ;
He preyde hire that to no créature
She sholdé tellen of his disfigure. ⁹⁶⁰

She swoor him nay, for al this world
to wynne,

She noldé do that vileynye or synne,
To make hir housbonde han so foul a
name.

She nolde nat telle it for hir owene shame ;
But nathélees hir thoughté that she dyde,
That she so longé sholde a conseil hyde ;
Hir thoughte it swal so soore aboute hir
herte,

That nedély som word hire moste asterte ;
And sith she dorsté telle it to no man,
Doun to a mareys fasté by she ran. ⁹⁷⁰
Til she came there her herté was a-fyre,
And as a bitore bombleth in the myre
She leyde hir mouth unto the water doun :
' Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy
soun,'

Quod she, 'to thee I telle it and namo,—
Myn housbonde hath longe asses erys two.
Now is myn herte all hool, now is it oute,
I myghte no lenger kepe it, out of doute.'
Heere may ye se, thogh we a tyme abyde,
Yet, out it moot, we kan no conseil hyde.
The remenant of the tale if ye wol heere,
Redeth Ovyde, and ther ye may it leere.

This knyght, of which my tale is
specially,

Whan that he saugh he myghte nat come
therly,

That is to seye, what wommen lovè moost,
Withinne his brest ful sorweful was the
goost.

But hoom he gooth, he myghté nat
sojourne,

The day was come that homward moste
he tourne,

951. *Myda*, *Midas*.

And in his wey it happed hym to ryde
 In al this care, under a forest syde, 990
 Wher as he saugh upon a dauncè go
 Of ladyes foure and twenty, and yet mo ;
 Toward the whichè daunce he drow ful
 yerne,
 In hope that som wysdom sholde he lerne ;
 But certeinly, er he came fully there,
 Vanysshèd was this daunce, he nyste
 where.

No creâturè saugh he that bar lyf,
 Save on the grene he saugh sittynge a wyf ;
 A fouler wight ther may no man devyse.
 Agayn the knyght this oldè wyf gan ryse,
 And seyde, 'Sire knyght, heer-forth ne
 lith no wey ; 1001

Tel me what that ye seken, by youre fey !
 Paraventure it may the better be ;
 Thise oldè folk kan muchel thyng,' quod
 she.

'My leevè mooder,' quod this knyght,
 'certeyn

I nam but dedd but if that I kan seyn
 What thyng it is that wommen moost
 desire :

Koude ye me wisse I wolde wel quite
 youre hire.'

'Plight me thy trouthe, heere in myn
 hand,' quod she,

'The nextè thyng that I requerè thee 1010
 Thou shalt it do, if it lye in thy myght,
 And I wol telle it yow, er it be nyght.'

'Have heer my trouthe,' quod the
 knyght, 'I graunte !'

Thanne quod she, 'I dar me wel
 avaunte

Thy lyf is sauf, for I wol stonde therby ;
 Upon my lyf, the queene wol seye as I.
 Lat se, which is the proudeste of hem alle
 That wereth on a coverchief or a calle,
 That dar seye "nay" of that I shal thee
 teche. 1019

Lat us go forth withouten lenger speche.'
 Tho rownèd she a pistel in his ere,
 And bad hym to be glad and have no fere.

Whan they be comen to the court, this
 knyght

Seyde he had holde his day as he haddè
 hight,

And redy was his answer, as he sayde.

Ful many a noble wyf, and many a mayde,
 And many a wydwe, for that they had
 been wise,

The queene hirself sittynge as a justise,
 Assembled been, his answer for to heere ;
 And afterward this knyght was bode
 appere. 1030

To every wight comanded was silence,
 And that the knyght sholde telle in
 audience .

What thyng that worldly wommen loven
 best.

This knyght ne stood nat stille as doth
 a best,

But to his questioun anon answerde,
 With manly voys, that al the court it herde.

'My ligè lady, generally,' quod he,
 'Wommen desiren have sovereynetee,
 As wel over hir housbond, as hir love,
 And for to been in maistrie hym above.
 This is youre mooste desir, thogh ye me
 kille. 1041

Dooth as yow list, I am heer at youre
 wille.'

In al the court ne was ther wyf, ne
 mayde,

Ne wydwe, that contraried that he sayde,
 But seyden he was worthy han his lyf ;
 And with that word up sturte the oldè wyf,
 Which that the knyght saugh sittynge on
 the grene ;

'Mercy !' quod she, 'my sovereyn lady
 queene !

Er that youre court departè, do me right ;
 I taughte this answer unto the knyght,
 For which he plightè me his trouthe there,
 The firstè thyng I woldè hym requere,
 He wolde it do, if it lay in his myght.
 Bifore the court thanne, preye I thee, sir
 knyght,'

Quod she, 'that thou me take unto thy
 wyf,

For wel thou woost that I have kept thy lyf.
 If I sey fals, sey "nay," upon thy fey !'

This knyght answerde, 'Allas, and
 weylaway !

I woot right wel that swich was my biheste.
 For Goddès love, as chees a newe
 requeste ! 1060

Taak al my good, and lat my body go.'

'Nay, thanne,' quod she, 'I shrewe us
bothé two !
For thogh that I be foul, and oold, and
poore,
I nolde, for al the metal, ne for oore
That under erthe is grave, or lith above,
But if thy wyf I were, and eek thy love !'
'My "love" !' quod he, 'nay, my
dampnacioun !

Allas ! that any of my nacioun
Sholde ever so foulé disparaged be !'
But al for noght, the ende is this, that he
Constreynéd was, he nedés moste hire
wedde, 1071
And taketh his oldé wyf, and gooth to
bedde.

Now wolden som men seye, pará-
venture,
That for my negligence I do no cure
To tellen yow the joye and al tharray,
That at the feesté was that ilké day ;
To which thyng shortly answeren I shal ;
I seye, ther nas no joye ne feeste at al.
Ther nas but hevynesse, and muché sorwe,
For prively he wedded hire on a morwe,
And al day after hidde hym as an owle,
So wo was hym, his wyf lookéd so foule.

Greet was the wo the knyght hadde in
his thoght,
Whan he was with his wyf abedde y-broght.
He walweth, and he turneth to and fro ;
His oldé wyf lay smyllynge evermo,
And seyde, 'O deeré housbonde,
benedicite !

Fareth every knyght thus with his wyf,
as ye ?

Is this the law of kyng Arthúr's hous ?
Is every knyght of his so dangerous ? 1090
I am youre owene love, and youré wyf ;
I am she which that savéd hath youre lyf,
And certes, yet dide I yow never unright,
Why fare ye thus with me, this firsté
nyght ?

Ye faren lyk a man had lost his wit ;
What is my gilt ? For Goddés love tel it,
And it shal been amended, if I may.'

'Amended !' quod this knyght, 'allas !
nay, nay

It wol nat been amended never mo,
Thou art so loothly, and so oold also, 1100

And ther-to comen of so lough a kynde,
That litel wonder is thogh I walwe and
wynde.

So, woldé God ! myn herté woldé breste !'

'Is this,' quod she, 'the cause of youre
unreste ?'

'Ye, certeinly,' quod he, 'no wonder is.'

'Now, sire,' quod she, 'I koude
amende al this,

If that me liste, er it were dayés thre ;
So wel ye myghté bere yow unto me.

'But for ye speken of swich gentillesse
As is descended out of old richesse, 1110
That therfore sholden ye be gentil men,
Swich arrogance is nat worth an hen.
Looke, who that is moost vertuous alway,
Pryvee and apert, and moost entendeth ay
To do the gentil dedés that he kan,
Taak hym for the grettest gentil man.
Crist wole we clayme of hym oure gentil-
lesse,

Nat of oure éldrés for hire old richesse ;
For, thogh they yeve us al hir heritage,—
For which we clayme to been of heigh
parage,— 1120

Yet may they nat biquethé for no thyng,
To noon of us, hir vertuous lyvynge,
That made hem gentil men y-called be,
And bad us folwen hem in swich degree.

'Wel kan the wisé poete of Florence,
That highté Dant, speken in this sen-
tence,—

Lo, in swich maner rym is Dantes tale,—
'Ful selde up riseth by his branches
smale

Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse
Wole that of hym we clayme oure
gentillesse ; 1130

For of oure éldrés may we no-thing
clayme,
But temporel thyng that man may hurte
and mayme.'

'Eek every wight woot this as wel as I,
If gentillesse were planted naturelly,
Unto a certeyn lynage down the lyne,
Pryvee nor apert, thanne wolde they
never fyne

1126. *Dant, Purgatorio*, vii. 121-3: 'Rade
volte risurge per li rami l' umana probitate,' etc.
1131. *eldres may we, & auncestres we.*

To doon of gentillesse the faire office ;
They myghte do no vileynye or vice.

‘ Taak fyr and ber it in the darkeste
hous, 1139

Bitwix this and the mount of Kaukasous,
And lat men shette the dorés and go
thenne,

Yet wole the fyr as fairé lye and brenne
As twenty thousand men myghte it
biholde ;

His office natureel ay wol it holde,
Up peril of my lyf, til that it dye.

‘ Heere may ye se wel how that
genterye

Is nat annexéd to possessioun,
Sith folk ne doon hir operacioun

Alwey, as dooth the fyr, lo, in his kynde ;
For, God it woot, men may wel often fynde
A lordés sone do shame and vileynye ;

And he that wole han pris of his gentrye,
For he was boren of a gentil hous,

And hadde his eldrés noble and vertuous,
And nyl hymselfen do no gentil dedis,

Ne folwen his gentil auncestre that deed is,
He nys nat gentil, be he duc or erl ;

For vileyns synful dedés make a cherl ;
For gentillessé nys but renomee

Of thyne auncestrés, for hire heigh
bountee, 1160

Which is a strangé thyng to thy persone.
Thy gentillessé cometh fro God allone ;

Thanne comth oure verray gentillesse of
grace,

It was no thyng biquethe us with oure
place.

‘ Thinketh how noble, as seith
Valerius,

Was thilké Tullius Hostillius,
That out of poverte roos to heigh noblesse.

Redeth Senek, and redeth eek Bocce,
Ther shul ye seen expressé, that no drede

is, 1169

That he is gentil that dooth gentil dedis ;
And therefore, leewe housbonde, I thus

conclude ;

Al were it that myne auncestres weren
rude,

1159. *renomee*, renown ; cp. Boethius, Bk. iii.
Prose 6.

1165. *Valerius*, see Valerius Maximus, Bk.
iii. ch. 4.

Yet may the hyé God, and so hope I,
Granté me grace to lyven vertuously ;
Thanne am I gentil, whan that I bigynne
To lyven vertuously and weyvé synne.

‘ And ther as ye of poverte me repreeve
The hyé God, on whom that we bileeve,
In wilful poverte chees to lyve his lyf,
And certés, every man, mayden, or wyf,
May understonde that Jhesus, hevene
kyng, 1181

Ne wolde nat chese a vicious lyvynge.
Glad poverte is an honeste thyng, certeyn ;
This wole Senec and other clerkés seyn ;
Whoso that halt hym payd of his poverte,
I holde hym riché, al hadde he nat a
sherte ;

He that coveiteth is a povere wight,
For he wolde han that is nat in his
myght ;

But he that noght hath, ne coveiteth have,
Is riche, although ye holde hym but a
knave. 1190

‘ Verray poverte, it syngeth proprely ;
Juvenal seith of poverte, myrily,

“ The pouré man, whan he goth by the
weye,

Bifore the thevés he may synge and pleye.”
Poverte is hateful good, and as I gesse

A ful greet bryngere-out of bisynesse,
A greet amendere eek of sapience,

To hym that taketh it in pácience.
Poverte is this, although it seme alenge,

Possessioun that no wight wol chalenge.
Poverte ful ofté, whan a man is lowe,

Maketh his God, and eek hymself, to
knowe.

Poverte a spectacle is, as thynketh me,
Thurgh which he may his verray freendés
see ;

And therefore, sire, syn that I noght yow
greve,

Of my poverte namoore ye me repreve.

‘ Now, sire, of eldú ye reprévé me ;

And certés, sire, thogh noon auctoritee
Were in no book, ye gentils of honóur

1192. *Juvenal, Sat. x. 22.*

1195. *hateful* (Corp.³ *hutel*, hostile). E quotes in the margin the answer to the question ‘ Quid est paupertas (Odibile bonum, sanitatis mater, etc.) ’ from the Dialogue of Adrian and Secundus, found in Vincent de Beauvais.

Seyn that men sholde an oold wight doon
favour, 1210

And clepe hym fader, for youre gentil-
lesse,

And auctours shal I fynden, as I gesse.

'Now, ther ye seye that I am foul and
old,

Than dredeyou noght to beena cokewold;

For filthe and celdé, al so moot I thee!

Been greté wardeyns upon chastitee:

But nathélees, syn I knowe youre delit,

I shal fulfille youre worldly appetit.

'Chese now,' quod she, 'oon of thise
thyngés tweye: 1219

To han me foul and old til that I deye,

And be to yow a trewé, humble wyf,

And never yow displese in al my lyf;

Or ellés ye wol han me yong and fair,

And take youre aventure of the repair

That shal be to youre hous by cause of me,

Or in som oother placé may wel be;

Now chese yourselfen, wheither that yow
liketh.'

This knyght avyseth hym and soré
siketh;

But atté laste he seyde in this manere:

'My lady and my love, and wyf so deere,

I put me in youre wisé governance; 1231

Cheseth youre self which may be moost

plesance,

And moost honour to yow and me also;

I do no fors the wheither of the two,

For as yow liketh it suffiseth me.'

'Thanne have I gcte of yow maistric,'
quod she,

'Syn I may chese, and governe as me
lest?'

'Ye, certés, wyf,' quod he, 'I holde
it best.'

'Kys me,' quod she, 'we be no lenger
wrothe,

For, by my trouthe, I wol be to yow
bothe,— 1240

This is to seyn, ye, bothé fair and good.

I prey to God that I moote sterven wood,

But I to yow be al so good and trewe,

As ever was wyf syn that the world was
newe;

And but I be to-morn as fair to seene

As any lady, emperice, or queene,

That is bitwixe the est and eek the west;
Dooth with my lyf and deth right as yow
lest.

Cast up the curtyng,—looke, how that it is.'

And whan the knyght saugh verrailly
al this, 1250

That she so fair was, and so yong ther-to,

For joye he hente hire in his armés two,

His herté bathéd in a bath of blisse;

A thousand tyme arewe he gan hire kisse,

And she obeyéd hym in every thyng

That myghté doon hym plesance or likyng.

And thus they lyve unto hir lyvés ende

In parfit joye; and Jhesu Crist us sende

Housbondés meeké, yongé, fressha-bedde,

And gracé toverbyde hem that we wedde,

And eek, I praye Jhesu to shorte hir lyves

That nat wol be govérned by hir wywes;

And olde and angry nygardes of dispence,

God sende hem sooné verray pestilence!

The prologe of the Freres Tale

This worthy I mytour, this noble Frere,

He made alway a maner louryng chiere

Upon the Somonour, but for honestee

No vileyns word as yet to hym spak he;

But atté laste he seyde unto the Wyf,

'Damé,' quod he, 'God yeve yow right
good lyf! 1270

Ye han heer touchéd, al so moot I thee!

In scolé-matere gret difficultee.

Ye han seyd muché thyng right wel, I
seye;

But, dame, heere as we rydè by the weye

Us nedeth nat to speken but of game,

And lete auctoritees, on Goddés name,

To prechyng, and to scolé of clergie,

And if it lykè to this campaignye

I wol yow of a somonour telle a game.

Pardee, yemay wel knowè by the name 1280

That of a somonour may no good be sayd.

I praye that noon of you be yvele apayd;—

A somonour is a rennere up and doun

With mandémentz for fornicacioun,

And is y-bet at every townés ende.'

Oure Hoost tho spak, 'A, sire, ye
sholde be hende

And curteys, as a man of youre estaat,

In compaignye ; we wol have no debaat !
Telletu your tale, and lat the Somonour
be.'

'Nay,' quod the Somonour, 'lat hym
seye to me 1290
What so hym list,—whan it comth to
my lot,

By God ! I shal hym quiten every grot !
I shal hym tellen which a greet honour
It is to be a flaterynge lymytour ;
And his office I shal hym telle y-wis.'

Oure Hoost answerde, 'Pees ! namoore
of this !'

And after this he seyde unto the Frere,
'Tel forth your tale, my leevè maister
deere.'

FRIAR'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Freres Tale

Whilom ther was dwellynge in my
contree

An erchèdeken, a man of heigh degree,
That boldely dide execucioun 1301

In punysshynge of fornicacioun,
Of wicchecraft, and eek of bawderye,
Of diffamacioun and avowtrye,
Of chirché-revès, and of testamentz,
Of contractes, and of lakke of sacramentz,
And eek of many another manere cryme,
Which nedeth nat rehercen for this tyme ;
Of usure, and of symonye also. 1309

But certès, lecchours dide he grettest wo ;
They sholdè syngen if that they were hent ;
And smalè tytheres weren foule y-shent ;
If any persone wolde upon hem pleyne
Ther myghte astarte hym no pecunyal
peyne.

For smalè tithès, and for smal offrynge,
He made the peple pitously to syng,
For er the bisshope caughte hem with
his hook,

1294, 1295. Between these lines, F8 wrongly
insert 1307, 1308.

The Freres Tale. Two Latin stories, one of a
wicked seneschal, the other of a lawyer, making
the same points as this, were printed by Thomas
Wright, and have been reprinted in Part I. of
the Chaucer Society's *Originals and Analogues*.
We may be sure that the setting of this story is
entirely Chaucer's own.

They weren in the erchèdeknes book ;
And thanne hadde he, thurgh his juris-
diccioun,

Power to doon on hem correccioun. 1320
He hadde a somonour redy to his hond ;
A slyer boye was noon in Engeland ;
For subtilly he hadde his espaille
That taughtè hym whér hym myghte
availle.

He koudè spare of lecchours oon or two,
To techen hym to fouré and twenty mo ;
For thogh this somonour wood was as
an hare,

To telle his harlotrye I wol nat spare,
For we been out of his correccioun,
They han of us no jurisdiccioun, 1330
Ne never shullen, terme of alle hir lyves.

'Peter ! so been the wommen of the
styves,'

Quod the Somonour, 'y-put out of my
cure !'

'Pees ! with myschance and with
mysaventure !'

Thus seyde our Hoost, 'and lat hym
telle his tale.

Now telletu forth, thogh that the
Somonour gale ;

Ne spareth nat, myn owene maister deere.'

This falsè thief, this somonour, quod
the Frere,

Hadde alwey bawdès redy to his hond,
As any hauk to lure in Engeland, 1340
That tolde hym al the secree that they
knewe,

For hire acqeyntance was nat come of
newe ;

They weren his approwours prively.

He took hymself a greet profit therby ;
His maister knew nat alwey what he wan.

Withouten mandement, a lewèd man

He koude somme, on peyne of Cristès curs,

And they were glade to fillè wel his purs,

And make hym gretè feestès atte nale ;

And rightas Judas haddè purses smale, 1350

And was a thief, right swich a thief was he.

His maister hadde but half his duètee.

He was, if I shal yeven hym his laude,

A theef, and eek a somnour, and a baude.

He hadde eek wenches at his retenue

1323. subtilly, H *prively*.

That whether that sir Robert, or sir
Huwe,

Or Jakke, or Rauf, or whoso that it were
That lay by hem, they tolde it in his ere.

Thus was the wenche and he of oon
assent, 1359

And he wolde fecche a feyned mandement,
And somne hem to the chapitre bothé
two,

And pile the man, and lete the wenché go.

Thanne wolde he seye, 'Freend, I
shal for thy sake

Do stricken thee out of oure lettres blake,
Thee thar namoore as in this cas travaille,
I am thy freend, ther I thee may availle.'

Certeyn he knew of briberfés mo

Than possible is to telle in yerés two;
For in this world nys doggè for the bowe
That kan an hurt deer from an hool y-
knowe 1370

Bet than this somnour knew a sly lecchour,
Or an avowtier, or a paramour;
And, for that was the fruyt of al his rente,
Therefore on it he sette al his entente.

And so bifel that onés on a day

This somnour, ever waiting on his pray,
Rod forth to somnean old wydwe, a ribibe,
Feynyng a causè, for he woldè brybe, -
And happed that he saugh bifore hym ryde
A gay yeman, under a forest syde. 1380
A bowe he bar, and arwes brighte and
kene;

He hadde upon a courtcypy of grene,
An hat upon his heed with frenges blake.

'Sire,' quod this somnour, 'hayl! and
wel atake!'

'Welcome!' quod he, 'and every
good felawe.

Wher rydestow, under this grenc-wode
shawe,'

Seydè this yeman; 'wiltow fer to day?'

This somnour hym answerde and
seydè, 'Nay,

Heere fastè by,' quod he, 'is myn entente
To ryden, for to reysen up a rente 1390
That longeth to my lordés duètee.'

'Artow thanne a bailly?' 'Ye,' quod
he,—

1356. *sir Robert*, a priest, not a knight.

1364. *thee*, E² *hire*.

He dorstè nat, for verray filthe and shame,
Seye that he was a somonour, for the
name.

'*Depardieux!*' quod this yeman,
'deerè broother!

Thou art a bailly, and I am another.

I am unknowen as in this contree;
Of thyn acqueyntance I wolde prayè thee,
And eek of bretherhede, if that yow leste;
I havè gold and silver in my cheste; 1400
If that thee happe to comen in oure shire
Al shal be thyn, right as thou wolt desire.'

'*Grantmercy!*' quod this somonour,
'by my feith!'

Everych in ootheres hand his trouthe leith,
For to be swornè bretheren til they deye;
In daliance they ryden forth hir weye.

This somonour that was as ful of jangles
As ful of venym been thise waryangles,
And ever enquiryng upon every thyng;
'Brother,' quod he, 'where is now youre
dwellyng, 1410

Another day if that I sholde yow seche?'
This yeman hym answerde, in softè
speche:

'Brother,' quod he, 'fer in the north
contree,

Where as I hope som tyme I shal thee see.
Er we departe I shal thee so wel wisse
That of myn hous ne shaltow never mysse.'

'Now, brother,' quod this somonour,
'I yow preyc,

Teche me, whil that we ryden by the
weye,—

Syn that ye been a baillif as am I,—
Som subtiltee, and tel me feithfully 1420
In myn office how I may moostè wyne,
And spareth nat for conscience ne synne,
But as my brother tel me how do ye.'

'Now, by my trouthe, brother deere,'
seyde he,

'As I shal tellen thee a feithful tale,
My wages been ful streitè and ful smale;
My lord is hard to me and daungerous,
And myn office is ful laborous;
And therfore by extorcions I lyve;
For sothe, I take all that men wol me yeve,
Algate by sleightè, or by violence. 1431

1395. *deere*, H² *lieve*.

1406. *hir weye*, H³ and *pleye(n)*.

Fro yeer to yeer I wynne al my dispençe ;
I kan no bettre tellé, feithfully.'

'Now certés,' quod this somonour,
'so fare I;

I sparé nat to taken, God it woot,
But if it be to hevy or to hoot,
What I may gete in conseil prively ;
No maner conscience of that have I ;
Nere myn extorcioun I myghte nat lyven,
Nor of swiche japés wol I nat be shryven.
Stomak, ne conscience, ne knowe I noon
I shrewe these shrifté-fadres everychoon !
Wel be we met, by God and by Seint
Jame !

But, leevé brother, tel me thanne thy
name,'

Quod this somonour ; 'in this meenéc
while.'

This yeman gan a litel for to smyle.

'Brother,' quod he, 'wiltow that I
thee telle ?

I am a feend ; my dwellyng is in helle,
And heere I ryde aboute my purchasyng,
To wite wher men wol yeve me anythyng.
My purchas is theffet of al my rente. ¹⁴⁵¹
Looke how thou rydest for the same
entente.

To wynné good, thou rekkest never how ;
Right so fare I, for ryde I wolde right
now

Unto the worldés endé for a preyé.'

'A !' quod this somonour, '*benedicite* !
what sey ye ?

I wende ye were a yeman trewely.
Ye han a mannés shape as wel as I,
Han ye a figure thanne determinat
In helle, ther ye been in youre estat ?' ¹⁴⁶⁰

'Nay, certainly,' quod he, 'ther have
we noon,

But whan us liketh we kan take us oon,
Or ellés make yow semé we been shape
Somtymé lyk a man, or lyk an ape ;
Or lyk an angel kan I ryde or go.
It is no wonder thyng thogh it be so ;
A lowsy jogelour kan deceyvé thee,
And *pardee* ! yet kan I moore craft than
he.'

'Why,' quod the somonour, 'ryde ye
thanne or goon

In sondry shape, and nat alwey in oon ?'

'For we,' quod he, 'wol us swiche
formés make ¹⁴⁷¹

As moost able is oure preyés for to take.'

'What maketh yow to han al this
labour ?'

'Ful many a cause, leevé sire
somonour,'

Seydè this feend ; 'but allé thyng hath
tyme ;

The day is short, and it is passéd pryme,
And yet ne wan I nothyng in this day ;
I wol entende to wyunnyng if I may,
And nat entende our wittés to declare ;
For, brother myn, thy wit is al to bare ¹⁴⁸⁰
To understonde, althogh I tolde hem thee.
But for thou axest why labouren we,—
Forsomtyme we been Goddés instrumentz,
And meenés to doon his comandémentz,
Whan that hym list, upon his créatures,
In divers art and in diverse figures.
Withouten hym we have no myght,
certayn,

If that hym list to stonden ther agayn.
And somtyme, at oure prayere, han we leve
Oonly the body and nat the soule greve ;
Witnesse on Job, whom that we diden wo ;
And somtyme han we myght of bothé
two,

This is to seyn, of soule and body eke ;
And somtyme be we suffred for to seke
Upon a man and doon his soule unreste,
And nat his body, and al is for the beste.
Whan he withstandeth oure temptacioun
It is a cause of his savacioun,—
Al be it that it was nat oure entente

IHe sholde be sauf, but that we wolde
hym hente,— ¹⁵⁰⁰

And somtyme be we servant unto man,
As to the erchébisschope, Seint Dunstan ;
And to the Apostles servant eek was I.'

'Yet tel me,' quod the somonour,
'feithfully,

Make ye yow newé bodies thus alway
Of elementz ?' The feend answerdè,
'Nay,

Somtyme we feyne, and somtyme we aryse
With dedé bodyes, in ful sondry wyse,
And speke as renably and faire and wel,

^{1479.} *wittes*, H *things*.

^{1486.} *art*, H⁴ *act*, *actes*.

As to the Phitonissa dide Samuel ; 1510
 And yet wol som men seye it was nat he.
 I do no fors of youre dyvynytee,
 But o thyng warne I thee, I wol nat jape,
 Thou wolt alगतs wite how we been
 shape,
 Thou shalt herafterwardes, my brother
 decre,
 Come there thee nedeth nat of me to leere,
 For thou shalt by thyn owene experience
 Konne in a chayer rede of this sentence
 Bet than Virgilé while he was on lyve,
 Or Dant also ; now lat us rydē blyve, 1520
 For I wole holdē compaignye with thee
 Til it be so that thou forsakē me.'

'Nay,' quod this somonour, 'that shal
 nat bityde !

I am a yeman knowen is ful wyde ;
 My trouthe wol I holde as in this cas ;
 For though thou were the devel, Sathanas,
 My trouthe wol I holdē to my brother,
 As I am sworn, and ech of us til oother,
 For to be trewē brother in this cas ;
 And bothe we goon abouten oure purchas.
 Taak thou thy part, what that men wol
 thee yeve, 1531

And I shal myn,—thus may we bothē
 lyve,—

And if that any of us have moore than
 oother,

Lat hym be trewe and parte it with his
 brother.'

'Igrauntē,' quod the devel, 'by my fey !'
 And with that word they ryden forth
 hir wey,

And right at the entryng of the townēs
 ende,

To which this somonour shoope hym for
 to wende,

They saugh a cart that charged was with
 hey,

Which that a cartere droof forth in his
 wey. 1540

Deepe was the wey, for which the cartē
 stood :

The cartere smoot and cryde as he were
 wood,

1510. *Phitonissa*, Pythoness, i.e. the Witch of
 Endor.

1518. i.e. be able to lecture on this theme.

'Hayt, Brok ! hayt, Scot ! what spare ye
 for the stones !

The feend,' quod he, 'yow fecchē, body
 and bones,

As ferforthly as ever were ye foled !

So muchē wo as I have with yow tholed !

The devel have al, bothe hors and cart
 and hey !'

This somonour seyde, 'Heere shal we
 have a pley' ;

And neer the feend he drough, as noght
 ne were,

Ful prively, and rowncd in his ere, 1550

'Herkne, my brother ! herkne, by thy
 feith !

Herestow nat how that the cartere seith ?
 Hent it anon, for he hath yeve it thee,

Bothe hey and cart and eek his caples
 thre.'

'Nay,' quod the devel, 'God woot,
 never a deel.

It is nat his entente, trust thou me weel ;
 Axe hym thyself, if thou nat trowest me,

Or ellēs stynt a while, and thou shalt see.'

This cartere thakketh his hors upon
 the croupe,

And they bigonnē drawn and to-stoupe.

'Heyt ! now,' quod he, 'ther Jhesu Crist
 yow blesse ! 1561

And al his handwerk bothē moore and
 lesse !

That was wel twight, myn owene lyard
 boy !

I pray God savē thee ! and Seintē Loy !

Now is my cart out of the slow, *pardee* !'

'Lo, brother,' quod the feend, 'what
 tolde I thee ?

Heere may ye se, myn owene deerē
 brother,

The carl spak oon thing, but he thoghte
 another.

Lat us go forth abouten oure viage ;

Heere wynne I nothyng upon cariage.' 1570

Whan that they coomen somewhat out
 of towne

1559. *thakketh*, smacks ; E² *taketh*.

1559. *hors*, plural.

1564. *pray*, E *pray to*.

1564. *thee*, H² *thy* (the) *body*.

1564. *Seinte Loy*, St. Eligius.

1568. *thing*, om. E.

This somonour to his brother gan to
rowne :

'Brother,' quod he, 'heere woneth an
old rebekke

That hadde almoost as lief to lese hire
nekke,

As for to yeve a peny of hir good.

I wole han twelf pens though that she be
wood,

Or I wol sompne hire unto oure office,
And yet, God woot, of hire knowe I no
vice ;

But, for thou kanst nat, as in this contree,
Wynne thy cost, taak heer ensample of
me.' 1580

This somonour clappeth at the wydwés
gate :

'Com out,' quod he, 'thou oldé virytrate !
I trowe thou hast som frere or preest with
thee.'

'Who clappeth ?' seyde this wyf,
'*benedicitee* !

God save you, sire ! what is youre sweeté
wille ?'

'I have,' quod he, 'of somonaunce a
bille ;

Up peyne of cursyng looké that thou be
To-morn bifore the erchédéknes knee,
Tanswere to the court of certeyn thynges.'

'Now, Lord,' quod she, 'Crist Jhesu,
kyng of kynges, 1590

So wisly helpé me, as I ne may !
I have been syk, and that ful many a day ;
I may nat go so fer,' quod she, 'ne ryde,
But I be deed, so priketh it in my syde.

May I nat axe a libel, sire somonour,
And answeere there by my procurátour
To swich thyng as men wole opposen me ?'

'Yis,' quod this somonour, 'pay anon
—lat se—

Twelf pens to me and I wole thee acquite.
I shal no profit han therby but lite, 1600
My maister hath the profit, and nat I.
Com of, and lat me ryden hastily ;
Gif me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarye !'

'Twelf pens !' quod she, 'now lady,
Seinté Marie !

So wisly help me out of care and synne,

1586. *somonaunce*, E *somonce*.

1587. *Up*, E *Upon*.

This wydé world thogh that I sholdé
wynne,

Ne have I nat twelf pens withinne myn
hoold ;

Ye knowen wel that I am poure and oold.
Kithé youre almesse on me, pouré wrecche.'

'Nay, thanne,' quod he, 'the foulé
feend me fecche, 1610

If I thexcusé though thou shul be spilt !'

'Allas !' quod she, 'God woot I have
no gilt.'

'Pay me !' quod he, 'or by the sweete
Seinte Anne,

As I wol here away thy newé panne
For dette which that thou owest me of
old,—

Whan that thou madest thyn housbonde
cokéwold

I payde at hoom for thy correccioun.'

'Thou lixt !' quod she, 'by my sava-
cioun

Ne was I never er now, wydwe ne wyf,
Somoned unto youre court in al my lyf !

Ne never I nas but of my body trewe. 1621

Unto the devel, blak and rough of hewe,
Yeve I thy body and my panne also !'

And whan the devel herde hire cursen
so

Upon hir knees, he seyde in this manere :

'Now, Mabély, myn owene moder decre,
Is this youre wyl in ernest that ye seyde ?'

'The devel,' quod she, 'so fecche hym
er he deye,—

And panne and al, but he wol hym
repente !'

'Nay, oldé stot ! that is nat myn
entente,' 1630

Quod this somonour, 'for to repenté me
For anythyng that I have had of thee ;

I wolde I hadde thy smok and every
clooth.'

'Now, brother,' quod the devil, 'be
nat wrooth :

Thy body and this panne been myne by
right ;

Thou shalt with me to hellé yet to-nyght,
Where thou shalt knowen of oure privétee

Moore than a maister of dyvynytee.'

And with that word this foulé feend hym
hente. 1639

Body and soule he with the devel wente
Where as that somonours han hir heritage;
And God, that makèd after his ymage
Mankyndé, save and gyde us alle and
some,

And leve this somonours goodè men
bicomè !

Lordynges, I koude han toold yow,
quod this Frere,

Hadde I had leyser for this Somnour heere,
After the text of Cristè, Poul, and John,
And of oure othere doctours many oon,
Swiche peynès that youre hertè myghte
agryse;

Al be it so no tongè may devyse— 1650
Thogh that I myghte a thousand wynter
telle—

The peynes of thilkè cursèd hous of helle;
But for to kepe us fro that cursèd place
Waketh and preyeth Jhesu for his grace,
So kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.
Herketh this word, beth war, as in this
cas :

'The leoun sit in his awayt alway
To sle the innocent, if that he may.'
Disposeth ay youre hertès to withstonde
The feend, that yow wolde makè thral
and bonde; 1660

He may nat temptè yow over youre
myght,
For Crist wol be youre champion and
knyght;
And prayeth that this somonours hem
repente
Of hir mysdedes, er that the feend hem
hente !

The prologe of the Somonours Tale

This Somonour in his styropes hye
stood.

Upon this Frere his hertè was so wood,
That lyk an aspen leef he quook for ire.

'Lordynges,' quod he, 'but o thyng I
desire,—

I yow biseke that of youre curteisye,

1663. H⁵ make the hit more direct, reading
this (oure) sompnour him repente, etc.

1665. *hye, H up he.*

Syn ye han herd this falsè Frere lye, 1670
As suffereth me I may my talè telle.

'This Frère bosteth that he knoweth
helle,

And God it woot, that it is litel wonder;
Frerès and feendès been but lyte asonder;
For, *pardee*! ye han oftè tyme herd telle
How that a frerè ravysshed was to helle
In spirit onès by a visioun;

And as an angel ladde hym up and doun,
To shewen hym the peynès that ther
were,

In al the placè saugh he nat a frere. 1680
Of oother folk he saugh ynowe in wo.

Unto this angel spak the frerè tho :

'“Now, sire,” quod he, “han frerès
swich a grace

That noon of hem shal comè to this place?”

““Yis,” quod this angel, “many a
millioun”;

And unto Sathanas he ladde hym doun,
And now hath Sathanas, seith he, a tayl,
Brodder than of a carryk is the sayl.

“Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas,”
quod he,

“Shewe forth thyn ers, and lat the frerè
se 1690

Where is the nest of frerès in this place”;
And er that half a furlong wey of space,
Right so as bees out swarmen from an
hye,

Out of the develes ers ther gonnè dryve
Twenty thousand frerès in a route,
And thurgh-out hellè swarmèden aboute,
And comen agayn as faste as they may
gon,

And in his ers they crepten everychon;
He clapte his tayl agayn and lay ful
stille.

This frere, whan he hadde lookèd al his
fille 1700

Upon the tormentz of this sory place,
His spirit God restorèd of his grace
Unto his body agayn, and he awook;
But nathèles, for ferè yet he quook,
So was the develes ers ay in his mynde;
That is his heritage of verray kynde.
God save yow allè, save this cursèd
Frere!

My prologe wol I endè in this manere.'

SUMMONER'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Somonour his Tale

Lordynges, ther is in Yorkshire, as I gesse,

A mersshly contrecallèd Holdernesne, ¹⁷¹⁰
In which ther wente a lymytour aboute
To preche, and eek to begge, it is no doute.

And so bifel that on a day this frere
Hadde prechéd at a chirche in his manere,
And specially, aboven every thyng,
Excited he the 'peple in his prechyng
To trentals, and to yeve for Goddès sake,
Wherwith men myghté hooly houses make,
Ther as divinè servyce is honoured,
Nat ther as it is wasted and devoured,
Ne ther it nedeth nat for to be yeve, ¹⁷²¹
As to possessioners that mowen lyve,
Thankéd be God! in wele and habundaunce.

'Trentals,' seyde he, 'deliveren fro penaunce

Hir freendès soulès, as wel olde as yonge;
Ye, whan that they been hastily y-songe,
Nat for to holde a preest joly and gay;
He syngeth nat but o masse in a day.
Delivereth out,' quod he, 'anon, the soules!

Ful hard it is, with flesshook or with oules ¹⁷³⁰

To been y-clawéd, or to brenne, or bake;
Now spede yow hastily for Cristès sake.'
And whan this frere had seyde al his entente

With *qui cum patre*, forth his wey he wente.

Whan folk in chirche had yeve him what hem lest,

He went his wey, no lenger wolde he reste.
With scrippe and tippéd staf, y-tukkéd hye,
In every hous he gan to poure and pryce,
And beggeth mele, and chese, or ellès corn.

His felawe hadde a stafe tippéd with horn,

Summoner's Tale. The central incident of this was, no doubt, common property; but the setting of the tale must be Chaucer's.

^{1709.} *Yorkshire, as, H Engeland.*

^{1737.} *tippéd, H pyked.*

A peyre of tables al of yvory, ¹⁷⁴¹

And a poyntel polysshed fetisly,
And wroote the namès alwey as he stood
Of allé folk that yaf hym any good,
Ascaunces that he woldé for hem prey.

'Yif us a busschel whetè, malt or reye,
A Goddès kechyl, or a trype of chese,
Or ellès what yow lyst, we may nat cheese;
A Goddès halfpeny, or a masse peny, ¹⁷⁴⁹
Or yif us of youre brawn, if ye have eny;
A dagon of youre blanket, leevè dame,
Oure suster deere,—lo heere I write youre name,—

Bacoun, or beef, or swich thyng as ye fynde.'

(A sturdy harlot wente ay hem bihynde,
That was hir hostès-man, and bar a sak,
And what men yaf hem leyde it on his bak.

And whan that he was out at dore anon,
He planed away the namès everichon
That he bifrom had writen in his tables.
He servéd hem with nyfles and with fables.

'Nay! ther thou list, thou Somonour!' quod the Frere. ¹⁷⁶¹

'Pees!' quod oure Hloost, 'for Cristès mooder deere;

Tel forth thy tale and spare it nat at al.'

So thryve I, quod this Somonour, so I shal!

So longe he wenté, hous by hous, til he Cam til an hous ther he was wont to be
Refresshéd moore than in an hundred placis;

Syk lay the goodè man whos that the place is;

Bedrede upon a couchè lowe he lay.

'*Deus hic!*' quod he, 'O Thomas, freend, good day!' ¹⁷⁷⁰

Seydè this frerè, curteisly and softe.

'Thomas,' quod he, 'God yeldè yow! ful ofte

Have I upon this bench faren ful weel;
Heere have I eten many a myrie meel';
And fro the bench he droof away the cat,

And leyde adoun his potente and his hat,
And eek his scrippe, and sette hym softe adoun.

His felawe was go walkéd into toun,

Forth with his knave into that hostelrye
Where as he shoope hym thilké nyght to
lye. 1780

'O deeré maister,' quod this siké man,
'How han ye faré sith that March bigan?
I saugh yow noght this fourtényght or
moore.'

'God woot,' quod he, 'laboured I
have ful soore,
And specially for thy savacioun
Have I seyd many a precious orisoun;
And for oure othere freendés, God hem
blesse.

I have to day been at youre chirche at
messe,

And seyde a sermoun after my symple wit,
Nat al after the text of hooly writ; 1790
For it is hard to yow, as I suppose,
And therfore wol I teche yow al the glose.

Glosynge is a glorious thyng certeyn,
For lettre sleeth, so as we clerkés seyn.
There have I taught hem to be charitable,
And spende hir good ther it is resonable;
And there I saugh oure dame,—a, where
is she?'

'Yond, in the yerd, I trowé that
she be,'

Seydè this man, 'and she wol come anon.'
'Ey, maister, welcom be ye, by Seint
John!' 1800

Seydè this wyf; 'how fare ye, hertely?'
The frere ariseth up ful curteisly

And hire embraceth in his armes narwe,
And kiste hire sweete, and chirketh as a
sparwe

With his lypis: 'Dame,' quod he,
'right weel,

As he that is youre servant every deel.
Thankéd be God, that yow yaf soule and
lyf,

Yct saugh I nat this day so fair a wyf
In al the chirké, God so savé me!'

'Ye, God amende défautés, sire,' quod
she, 1810

'Algatés welcome be ye, by my fey!'
'Graunt mercy, dame, this have I
founde alwey,

But of youre greté goodnesse, by youre
leve,

I woldé prey yow that ye nat yow greve,

I wole with Thomas speke a litel throwe;
This curatz been ful negligent and slowe
To gropé tendrèly a conscience.

In shrift, in prechyng is my diligence,
And studie in Petrés wordés and in
Poules. 1819

I walke, and fisshé cristen mennés soules,
To yelden Jhesu Crist his propré rente.
To sprede his word is set al myn entente.'

'Now, by youre leve, O deeré sire,'
quod she,

'Chideth him weel, for, seinté Trinitee!
He is as angry as a pissémyre,
Though that he have al that he kan desire,
Though I him wrye a-nyght and make
hym warm,

And on hym leye my leg, outhur myn arm,
He groneth lyk oure boor, lith in oure
sty.

Oother desport ryght noon of hym have I,
I may nat plesse hym in no maner cas.' 1831

'O Thomas, *je vous dy*, Thomas!
Thomas!

This maketh the feend, this mosté ben
amended;

Ire is a thyng that hyé God defended,
And therof wol I speke a word or two.'

'Now, maister,' quod the wyf, 'er that
I go,

What, wol ye dyne? I wol go therabouté.'
'Now, damé,' quod he, '*je vous dy*
sanz doute,

Have I nat of a capoun but the lyvere,
And of youre softé breed nat but a
shyvere, 1840

And after that a rosted piggés heed,—
But that I nolde no beest for me were
deed,—

Thanne hadde I with yow boomly suffi-
saunce.

I am a man of litel sustenance.
My spirit hath his fostryng in the Bible,
The body is ay so redy and penyble
To waké, that my stomak is destroyed;
I prey yow, damé, ye be nat anoyed,
Though I so freendly yow my conseil
shewe.

By God, I wolde nat telle it but a fewe!'
'Now, sire,' quod she, 'but o word er
I go: 1851

Mychild is deed withinne thise wykès two,
Soone after that ye wente out of this toun.'

'His deeth saugh I by revelacioun,'

Seith this frere, 'at hoom in oure dortour.
I dar wel seyn that er that half an hour
After his deeth, I saugh hym born to blisse
In my avisioun, so God me wisse !

So dide our sexteyn and oure fermerer,
That han been trewè frerès fifty yeer,—
They may now, God be thanked of his
loone ! 1861

Maken hir jubilee, and walke allone.
And up I roos, and al oure covent eke,
With many a tearè triklyng on my cheke,
Withouten noyse, or claterynge of belles,
Te deum was oure song and no thyng
elles ;

Save that to Crist I seyde an orisoun,
Thankynge hym of his revelacioun ;
For, sire and damè, trusteth me right weel,
Oure orisons been moore effectuel, 1870
And moore we seen of Cristès secree
thynges,

Than burel folk, al though they weren
kynges.

We lyve in poverté and in abstinence,
And burell folk in richesse and despence
Of mete and drynke, and in hir foul delit.
We han this worldès lust al in despit.

Lazar and Dives lyveden diversly
And diverse gerdoun hadden they ther-by.
Who-so wol preye he moot faste and be
clene,

And fatte his soule and make his body
lene. 1880

We fare as seith thapostle ; clooth and
foode

Suffisen us, though they be nat ful goode ;
The clennessé and the fastynge of us freres
Maketh that Crist acceptethoure preyerés.

'Lo, Moyses fourty dayes and fourty
nyght

Fasted, er that the heighè God of myght
Spak with hym in the mount of Synay.
With empty wombe, fastynge many a
day,

Receyvèd he the lawè that was writen
With Goddès fynger ; and Elye, wel ye
witen, 1890

In mount Oreb, er he hadde any speche

With hyè God, that is oure lyvès leche,
He fasted longe, and was in contemp-
launce.

'Aaron, that hadde the temple in
governance,

And eek the othere preestès everichon,
Into the temple whan they sholdè gon
To preyè for the peple, and do servyse,
They nolden drynken in no maner wyse
No drynkè which that myghte hem
dronkè make ; 1899

But there, in abstinence preye and wake,
Lest that they deyden :—taak heede what
I seye,—

But they be sobre that for the peple preye,
War that !—I seye namoore,—for it
suffiseth.

Oure Lord Jhesu, as hooly writ devyseth,
Yaf us ensample of fastynge and preyerés ;
Therefore we mendynantz, we sely freres,
Been wedded to povérte and continence,
To charite, humblesse, and abstinence,
To persecucioun for rightwisnesse,
To wepyngé, misericordè and clennessé ;
And therefore may ye se that oure pre-
yerés,— 1911

I speke of us, we mendynantz, we freres,—
Been to the hyè God moore acceptable
Than yourès with youre feestès at the table.
Fro Paradys first, if I shal nat lye,
Was man out chaced for his glotonye,
And chaast was man in Paradys certeyn.

'But herknè, Thomas, what I shal the
seyn,

I ne have no text of it, as I suppose,
But I shal fynde it in a maner glose, 1920
That specially oure sweetè Lord Jhesus
Spak this by frerès, whan he seyde thus :

'"Blessed be they that povere in
spirit been,"—

And so forth al the gospel may ye seen
Wher it be likker oure professioun,
Or hirs that swymmen in possessioun,—
Fy on hire pompe and on hire glotonye !
And for hir lewèdnesse, I hem diffye !

'Me thynketh they been lyk Jovinyan,
Fat as a whale, and walkynge as a swan,
Al vinolent as botel in the spence. 1931

1929. *Jovinyan*, probably the mythical emperor
of the *Gesta Romanorum*.

Hir preyere is of ful greet reverence
Whan they for soulés seye the Psalm of
Davit,—

Lo, “buf” they seye, *cor meum eructavit*,—
Who folweth Cristes gospel, and his foore,
But we that humble been and chaast and
poore,

Werkeris of Goddès word, not auditours?
Therefore, right as an hauk up at a sours
Up springeth into their, right so prayeres
Of charitable and chaste, bisy freres 1940
Maken hir sours to Goddès crès two.
Thomas, Thomas, somoote I ryde or go,—
And by that lord that clepid is Seint Yve!
Nere thou oure brother sholdestou nat
thryve!

In our chapitré praye we day and nyght
To Crist that he thee sendé heele and
myght

Thy body for to weelden, hastily.’

‘God woot,’ quod he, ‘no thyng therof
feele I!’

As help me Crist, as I, in fewé yeres,
Han spent upon diversé manere freres 1950
Ful many a pound, yet fare I never the bet.
Certeyn my good I have almoost biset,—
F’arwel my gold, for it is al ago!’

The frere answerde, ‘O Thomas, dos-
tow so?’

What nedeth yow diversé frerès seche?
What nedeth hym that hath a parfit leche
To sechen othere lechès in the toun?
Youre inconstance is youre confusioun.
Holde ye thanne me, or ellès oure covent,
To praye for yow been insufficient? 1960
Thomas, that japè nys nat worth a myte;
Youre maladye is for we han to lyte.

A! yif that covent half a quarter otes!

A! yif that covent foure and twentygrotes!

A! yif that frere a peny, and lat hym go!

Nay, nay, Thomas, it may no thyng be so!

What is a ferthyng worth parted in twelve?

Lo, ech thyng that is oned in it selve

Is mooré strong than whan it is to-scatered.

Thomas, of me thou shalt nat been y-
flatered; 1970

Thou woldest han oure labour al for noght;

The hyé God, that al this world hath
wrought,

Seith that the werkman worthy is his hyre.

Thomas, noght of youre tresor I desire,
As for my self, but that al oure covent
To preye for yow is ay so diligent,

And for to buylden Cristès owene chirche.

Thomas, if ye wol lernen for to wirche

Of buyldyng up of chirches, may ye fynde

If it be good in Thomas lyf of Inde. 1980

Ye lyc heere ful of anger and of ire,

With which the devel set youre herte afyre,

And chiden heere the sely innocent,

Youre wyf, that is so meke and pacient;

And therefore, Thomas, trowe me if thee
leste,

Ne stryve nat with thy wyf, as for thy
beste;

And ber this word away now, by thy feith,
Touchyng this thyng, lo what the wisé
seith,

“Withinne thyn hous ne be thou no leoun;

To thy subgitz do noon oppressioun, 1990

Ne makè thyne acqueyntis fro the flee.”

And, Thomas, yet eft-soones I chargè thee,

Be war of yre that in thy bosom slepeth,

War fro the serpent that so slyly crepeth

Under the gras and styngeth subtilly;

Be war, my sone, and herkne patiently,

That twenty thousand men han lost hir
lyves

For stryvyng with hir lemmans and hir
wyves.

Now sith ye han so hooley, meke a wyf,

What nedeth yow, Thomas, to maken stryff?

Ther nys, y-wys, no serpent so cruél 2001

Whan man tret on his tayl, ne half so fel

As womman is, whan she hath caught an
ire;

Vengeance is thanné al that they desire.

Ire is a synne, oon of the gretè sevene,

Abhomynable unto the God of hevене,

And to hymself it is destruccioun.

This every lewéd viker, or persoun,

Kan seye, how ire engendreth homycide.

Ire is in sooth executour of pryde. 2010

I koude of ire seye so muché sorwe

My talé sholdé lasté til tomorwe;

And therefore preye I God, bothe day and
nyght,

1980. *Thomas*. St. Thomas professed to be an
architect, but the palace he built for the Indian
king was in heaven.

An irous man God sende hym litel myght.
It is greet harme and certès greet pitee
To sette an irous man in heigh degree.

‘Whilom ther was an irous potestat,
As seith Senek, that durynge his estaat
Upon a day out ryden knyghtès two;
And as Fortúnè wolde that it were so
That oon of hem cam hoom, that oother
nought.

2021

Anon the knyght bfore the juge is broght,
That seyde thus: “Thou hast thy felawe
slayn,

For which I deme thee to the deeth
certayn”;

And to another knyght comanded he,
“Go lede hym to the deeth, I chargè
thee!”

And happed as they wentè by the weye,
Toward the placè ther he sholdè deye,
The knyght cam which men wenden had
be deed.

Thanne thoughtè they it was the bestè
reed,

2030

To lede hem bothè to the juge agayn.
They seiden, “Lord, the knyght ne hath
nat slayn

His felawe; heere he standeth hool alyve.”
“Ye shul be deed,” quod he, “so moot I
thryve!

That is to seyn, bothe oon, and two, and
thre.”

And to the firstè knyght right thus spak
he:

“I dampnèd thee, thou most algate be
deed;

And thou, also, most nedès lese thyn heed,
For thou art causè why thy felawe deyth”;
And to the thridde knyght right thus he
seith:

2040

“Thou hast nat doon that I comanded
thee”;

And thus he dide doon sleen hem allè
thre.

‘Irous Cambises was eek dronkelewe
And ay delited hym to been a shrewe;
And so bifel a lord of his meynce,

2018. *Senek.* This story is told by Seneca, *De Ira*, l. 16, of Cn. Piso (T.)

2043. *Cambises.* This story is also in Seneca, *iii. 14*; it differs a little from one in Herodotus, *Bk. iii. (T.)*

That lovèd vertuous moralitee,
Seyde on a day bitwene hem two right
thus:

“A lord is lost if he be vicius,
And dronkenesse is eek a foul record
Of any man, and namely in a lord. 2050
Ther is ful many an eye, and many an ere,
Awaityng on a lord, and he noot where.
For Goddès love drynk moore attemprely!
Wyn maketh man to lesen wrecchedly
His mynde and eek his lymès everichon.”

“The revers shaltou se,” quod he anon,
“And preeve it by thyn owene experience,
That wyn ne dooth to folk no swich
offence.

Ther is no wyn bireveth me my myght
Of hand, ne foot, ne of myne eyen sight”;
And for despit he drank ful muchel moore,
An hondred part, than he hadde doon
bifore;

And right anon, this irous, cursèd wrecche
Léet this knyghtès sone bfore hym fecche,
Comandyng hym he sholde bfore hym
stonde;

And sodeynly he took his bowe in honde,
And up the streng he pullèd to his ere,
And with an arwe he slow the child right
there.

“Now, wwhether have I a siker hand or
noon?”

Quod he; “is al my myght and mynde
agon?”

2070

Hath wyn byrevèd me myne eyen sight?”
What sholde I tellè thanswere of the
knyght?

His sone was slayn, ther is namoore to
seye.

Beth war, therefore, with lordès how ye
pleye.

Syngeth *Placebo*,—and I shal, if I kan,
But if it be unto a pourè man.

To a poure man men sholde his vices telle.
But nat to a lord, thogh he sholde go
to helle.

‘Lo, irous Cirus, thilkè Percien,
How he destroyed the ryver of Gysen, 2080
For that an hors of his was dreynt ther-
inne,

2079. *Cirus.* See Herodotus, *Bk. i.*, and Seneca, *De Ira*, both of whom call the river Gyndes.

Whan that he wenté Babiloigne to wynne.
He madé that the ryver was so smal
That wommen myghté wade it over al.

'Lo, what seyde he that so wel teché
kan :

'Ne be no felawe to an irous man,
Ne with no wood man walké by the weye,
Lest thee repente,"—ther is namoore to
seye.'

'Now, Thomas, leevé brother, lef thyn
ire,
Thou shalt me fynde as just as is a squire ;
Hoold nat the develes knyf ay at thyn
herte,—

2091

Thyn angre dooth thee al to sooré
smerte,—

But shewe to me al thy confessioun.'

'Nay,' quod the siké man, 'by Seint
Symoun !

I have be shryven this day at my curat ;
I have hym toold hoolly al myn estat.
Nedeth namoore to speken of it, seith he,
But if me list, of myn humylitee.'

'Yif me thanne of thy gold, to make
oure cloystre,'

Quod he, 'for many a muscle and many
an oystre,

2100

Whan othere men han ben ful wel at eyse,
Hath been oure foode, our cloystre for
to reyse ;

And yet, God woot, unnethe the
fundèment

Parfournéd is, ne of our pavèment
Nys nat a tyle yet withinne oure wones,—
By God, we owen fourty pound for stones !

'Now help, Thomas ! for hym that
harwed helle,

For ellés mosté we oure bookés selle ;
And if ye lakke oure predicacioun

2109

Thanne goth the world al to destruccioun.
For whoso wolde us fro this world bireve,
So God me savé, Thomas, by youre leve,
He wolde bireve out of this world the
sonne ;

For who kan teche, and werchen, as we
konne ?

And that is nat of litel tyme,' quod he,

'But syn that Elie was, or Elise,
Han frerés been,—that fynde I of record ;

2116. *Elie, E. Ennok.*

In charitee y-thanked be oure Lord !

Now, Thomas, helpe for seinté charitee !'
And doun anon he sette hym on his
knee.

2120

This siké man wax wel ny wood for ire ;
He woldé that the frere had been on fire
With his false dissymulacioun.

'Swich thyng as is in my possessioun,'
Quod he, 'that may I yeven, and noon
oother.

Ye sey me thus, "that I am youré
brother" ?'

'Ye, certés,' quod the frere, 'trusteth
weel,

I took oure dame oure lettre and oure
seel.'

'Now wel,' quod he, 'and somewhat
shal I yeve

2129

Unto youre hooly covent whil I lyve,
And in thyn hand thou shalt it have anon,
On this condicioun, and oother noon ;
That thou departe it so, my leevé brother,
That every frere have also muche as
oother ;

This shaltou swere on thy professioun,
Withouten fraud or cavillacioun.'

'I swere it,' quod this freré, 'by my
feith !'

And therewithal his hand in his he leith,—
'Lo heer my feith, in me shal be no lak.'

'Now thanne, put in thyn hand doun
by my bak,'

2140

Seydè this man, 'and gropé wel bihynde ;
Bynethè my buttok ther shaltow fynde
A thyng that I have hyd in pryvetee.'

'A !' thoghte this frere, 'this shal go
with me !'

And doun his hand he launcheth to the
clifte,

In hopé for to fyndé there a yifte ;
And whan this siké man felté this frere
Abouté his tuwel gropé there and heere,
Amydde his hand he leet the frere a
fart ;

Ther nys no capul drawynge in a cart

2150

That myghte have lete a fart of swich a
soun.

The frere up stirte, as dooth a wood
leoun,—

2133. *leeve, H^o deere.*

'A ! falsé cherl,' quod he, 'for Goddès bones !

This hastow for despit doon for the nones ;
Thou shalt abyte this fart, if that I may !'

His meynee, whiche that herden this affray,

Cam lepyng in, and chacéd out the frere ;
And forth he gooth with a ful angry cheere,

And fette his felawe, ther as lay his stoor.
He lookéd as it were a wildé boor,—

He grynté with his teeth, so was he wrooth ; 2161

A sturdy paas doon to the court he gooth,
Wher as ther woued a man of greet honour,

To whom that he was alwey confessour ;
This worthy man was lord of that village.

This freré cam as he were in a rage,
Where as this lord sat ctyng at his bord ;

Unnethés myghte the freré speke a word,
Til atté laste he seyde, 'God yow see !'

This lord gan looke and seide,
'Benedicitee !' 2170

What, freré John, what maner world is this ?

I se wel that som thyng ther is amys ;
Ye looken as the wode were ful of thevys ;
Sit down anon, and tel me what youre grief is,

And it shal been amended, if I may.'

'I have,' quod he, 'had a despit this day,

God yeldé yow ! adoun in youre village,
That in this world is noon so poure a page,
That he nolde have abhomynacioun 2179

Of that I have receyvéd in youre toun ;
And yet ne greveth me no thyng so soore,
As that this oldé cherl, with lokkès hoore,
Blaspheméd hath our hooly covent eke.'

'Now, maister,' quod this lord, 'I yow biseke'—

'No "maister," sire,' quod he, 'but servitour,

Thogh I have had in scolé swich honour ;
God liketh nat that "Raby" men us calle,
Neither in market ne in youre largé halle.'

'No fors,' quod he, 'but tel me al youre grief.'

2172. *se wel that som, E. trowe som maner.*

'Sire,' quod this frere, 'an odious meschief 2190

This day bityd is to myn ordre and me ;
And so *par consequens* in ech degree
Of hooly chirché ; God amende it soonc !'

'Sire,' quod the lord, 'ye woot what is to doone ;

Distempe yow noght, ye be my confes-sour ;

Ye been the salt of the erthe and the savour ;

For Goddès love youre pacience ye holde ;

Tel me youre grief ;' and he anon hym tolde,

As ye han herd biforn, ye woot wel what.

The lady of the hous al stillé sat 2200
Til she had herdé what the freré sayde ;

'Ey ! Goddès mooder,' quod she,—
'blisful mayde !

Is ther oght ellés ? Telle me feithfully.'

'Madame,' quod he, 'how thynké ye herebye ?'

'How that me thynketh ?' quod she ;
'so God me speede !

I seye, a cherle hath doon a cherlès dede.
What sholde I seye ? God lat hym never thee,

His siké heed is ful of vanytee ;

I holde hym in a manere frenésye.'

'Madame,' quod he, 'by God I shal nat lye, 2210

But I on oother wise may be awreke,
I shal disclaundre hym, over al ther I speke,—

This falsé blasphemour that chargéd me
To parté that wol nat departed be,—

To every man yliché, with meschaunce !'

The lord sat stille, as he were in a

traunce,

And in his herte he rolléd up and down
'How hadde the cherl ymaginacioun,

To shewé swich a probleme to the frere ?
Never erst er now herd I of swich mateere ; 2220

I trowe the devel putte it in his mynde.

In ars-metriké shal ther no man fynde,
Biforn this day of swich a questioun.

2211. *wise, E² weyes.*

Certès, it was a shrewed conclusioun,
 That everyman sholde have yliche his part,
 As of the soun or savour of a fart.
 O vile proudè cherl ! I shrewe his face !
 Lo, sirès, quod the lord, with hardè grace,
 'Who herd ever of swich a thyng er now ?
 "To every man ylikè,"—tel me how ?
 It is an impossible, it may nat be. 2231
 Ey, nycè cherl ? God lete thee never thee !
 The rumblyng of a fart, and every soun,
 Nis but of eir reverberacioun,
 And ever it wasteth, litel and litel away.
 Ther is no man kan demen, by my fey !
 If that it were departed equally.
 What, lo, my cherl, lo, yet how shrewedly,
 Unto my confessour to day he spak ;
 I holde hym, certeyn, a demonyak. 2240
 Now ete youre mete, and lat the cherl go
 pleye.
 Lat hym go hongre hymself a devel weye !'

*The wordes of the lordes Squier and his
 kervere for departyng of the fart on
 twelve*

Now stood the lordès Squier at the bord,
 That karf his mete, and herdè, word by
 word,
 Of allè thyngès whiche that I have sayd ;
 'My lord,' quod he, 'be ye nat yvele
 apayd,
 I koudè tellè for a gowne-clooth
 To yow, sir frerè, so ye be nat wrooth,
 How that this fart sholde evene y-delèd be
 Among youre covent, if it lykèd me.' 2250
 'Tel,' quod the lord, 'and thou shalt
 have anon
 A gowne-clooth, by God, and by Seint
 John !'
 'My lord,' quod he, 'whan that the
 weder is fair,
 Withouten wynd, or perturbyng of air,
 Lat bryng a cartèwheel into this halle,—
 But lookè that it have his spokès alle,—
 Twelve spokès hath a cartwheel comunly ;
 And bryng me thanne twelf frerès,—
 woot ye why ?

2224. H⁶ read *who schulde make a demonstra-
 cioun.*
 2227. *vile*, H⁶ *nycè*.

For thritten is a covent, as I gesse ;
 The confessor heere, for his worthynesse,
 Shal parfournè up the nombre of his
 covent. 2261
 Thanne shal they knelè down, by oon
 assent,
 And to every spokès endè, in this manere,
 Ful sadly leye his nosè shal a frere.
 Youre noble confessor there, God hym
 save !
 Shal holde his nose upright under the nave.
 Thanne shal this cherl, with bely stif
 and toght
 As any tabour, hyder been y-brought,
 And sette hym on the wheel right of this
 cart, 2269
 Upon the nave, and make hym lete a fart,
 And ye shul seen, up peril of my lyf,
 By preevè which that is demonstratif,
 That equally the soun of it wol wende,
 And eke the styng, unto the spokès endè,—
 Save that this worthy man, youre con-
 fessor,
 By cause he is a man of greet honour,
 Shal have the firstè fruyt, as resoun is.
 The noble usage of frerès yet is this,
 The worthy men of hem shul first be
 served,— 2279
 And certainly, he hath it weel disserved,
 He hath to day taught us so muchel good
 With prechyng in the pulpit ther he stood,
 That I may vouchèsauf, I sey for me,
 He hadde the firstè smel of fartès three,
 And so wolde al the covent hardily ;
 He bereth hym so faire and hoolily.
 The lord, the lady, and alle men save
 the frere,
 Seyden that Jankyn spak in this matere
 As wel as Euclide, or Protholomee :
 Touchyng this cherl, they seyden, sub-
 tiltee 2290
 And heigh wit made hym speken as he
 spak ;
 He nys no fool, ne no demonyak ;
 And Jankyn hath y-wonne a newe gowne.
 My tale is doon,—we been almoost at
 towne.

2272. *preewe which*, H *verray proof*.
 2289. *Protholomee*, Ptolemy.
 2294. *at townè*, Sittingbourne.

GROUP E

*Heere folweth The Prologe of the Clerkes
Tale of Oxenford*

'SIRE Clerk of Oxenford,' oure Hosté
sayde,
'Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a
mayde,
Were newé spoused, sittinge at the bord ;
This day ne herd I of youre tonge a word.
I trowe ye studie abouté som sophyme ;
But Salomon seith "every thyng hath
tyme."

For Goddès sake ! as beth of bettre cheere !
It is no tymé for to studien heere ;
Telle us som myrie talé, by youre fey !
For what man that is entred in a pley, 10
He nedés moot unto the pley assente ;
But precheth nat, as frerès doon in Lente,
To make us for oure oldé synnés wepe,
Ne that thy talé make us nat to slepe.
Telle us som murie thyng of áventúres,—
Youre termés, youre colours, and youre
figúres

Keepe hem in stoor til so be ye endite
Heigh style, as whan that men to kyngés
write ;
Speketh so pleyn at this tyme, I yow
preye, 19

That we may understandé what ye seye.
This worthy clerk benignely answerde,
'Hosté,' quod he, 'I am under youre yerde,
Ye han of us, as now, the governance,
And therefor wol I do yow obeisance
As fer as resoun axeth hardily.

I wol yow telle a talé which that I
Lernéd at Padwé of a worthy clerk,
As prevéd by his wordés and his werk ;
He is now deed and nayléd in his cheste,
I prey to God so yeve his soulé reste ! 30

'Fraunceys Petrak, the lauriat poete,
Highté this clerk whos rethoriké sweete
Enlumyned al Ytaille of poetrie,—

19. I, E² we.

27. *Lerned at Padwe.* Petrarch was either at or near Padua from Jan. to Sept. 1373, and Chaucer may easily have visited him on his Genoese mission of that year.

29. *deed.* Petrarch died in 1374.

As Lynyan dide of philosophie,
Or lawe, or oother art particuler,—
But deeth, that wol nat suffre us dwellen
heer,

But as it were a twynklyng of an eye,
Hem bothe hath slayn, and allé shul we
dye.

But forth to tellen of this worthy man
That taughté me this tale, as I bigan, 40
I seye that first with heigh stile he
enditeth,

Er he the body of his talé writeth,
A prohemye, in the which discryveth he
Pemond, and of Salucés the contree ;
And speketh of Apennyn, the hillés hye
That been the boundés of West Lum-
bardye,

And of Mount Vesulus in special,
Where as the Poo out of a wellé smal
Taketh his firsté spryngyng and his sours,
That estward ay encresseth in his cours 50
To Emeleward, to Ferrare and Venyse,—
The which a longe thyng weré to devyse,
And trewely, as to my juggément,
Me thynketh it a thyng impertinent,
Save that he wole conveyen his mateere ;
But this is his talé which that ye may heere.'

CLERK OF OXFORD'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Tale of the Clerk of
Oxenford*

PART I

Ther is, at the West sydé of Ytaille,
Doun at the roote of Vesulus the colde,

34. *Lynyan*, an Italian jurist, who died in 1383.

44. *Pemond*, Piedmont.

44. *Saluces*, Saluzzo.

47. *Mount Vesulus*, Monte Viso.

51. *To Emeleward*, i.e. towards the district traversed by the old *Via Aemiliana*.

56. *this is*, E² *this*.

The Tale of the Clerk. This is for the most part a close rendering of the Latin version of the Tale of Griselda, written by Petrarch after reading Boccaccio's story in the *Decamerone*. Chaucer's chief departures from Petrarch are pointed out in the notes.

A lusty playne, habundant of vitaille,
Where many a tour and toun thou mayst
biholde 60

That founded were in tyme of fadrès olde,
And many another delitable sighte,
And Salucés this noble contree highte.

A markys whilom lord was of that lond,
As were his worthy eldrès hym bifore,
And obeisant and redy to his hond
Were alle his ligès, bothe lasse and moore.
Thus in delit he lyveth, and hath doon
yoore,
Biloved and drad, thurgh favour of
Fortune, 69
Bothe of his lordès and of his commune.

Therwith he was, to speke as of lynage,
The gentilleste y-born of Lumbardy; ;
A faire persone, and strong, and yong
of age,
And ful of honour and of curteisye;
Discreet ynogh his contree for to gye,—
Save in somme thyngès that he was to
blame,—
And Walter was this yongè lordès name.

I blame him thus, that he considered
noght
In tyme comyng what hym myghte
bityde; 79
But in his lust present was al his thoght,
As for to hauke and hunte on every syde,
Wel ny alle othere curès leet he slyde;
And eek he nolde, and that was worst of
alle,
Weddè no wyf, for noght that may bifalle.

Oonly that point his peplè bar so soore
That flokmele on a day they to hym
wente,
And oon of hem that wisest was of
loore,—

^{78.} *considered, E⁸ considereth.* We may quote the original of this stanza to show how close Chaucer keeps to his text: 'vir insignis nisi quod, præsenti sua sorte contentus, incuriosissimus futurorum erat. Itaque venatui aucupioque deditus sic illis incubuerat ut alia pene cuncta negligeret; quodque in primis ægre populi ferabant ab ipsis quoque conjugii consiliis abhorreret.'

Or ellès that the lord best wolde assente
That he sholde telle hym what his peplè
mente,

Or ellès koude he showe wel swich
mateere,— 90

He to the markys seyde as ye shul heere :

'O noble markys, youre humanitee
Asseureth us and yeveth us hardinesse
As ofte as tyme is of necessitee
That we to yow mowe telle oure hevynesse.

Accepteth, lord, now for youre gentillesse,
That we with pitous herte unto yow
pleyne,
And lat youre erès nat my voys desdeyne.

Al have I noght to doone in this mateere
Moore than another man hath in this place,
Yet for as muche as ye, my lord so deere,
Han alwey shewed me favour and grace,
I dar the bettrè aske of yow a space
Of audience, to shewen oure requeste,
And ye, my lord, to doon right as yow
leste;

For certès, lord, so wel us liketh yow
And al youre werk, and ever han doon,
that we
Ne koudè nat us-self devysen how
We myghtè lyven in moore felicitee,
Save o thyng, lord, if it youre willè be, ¹¹⁰
That for to been a wedded man yow leste;
Thanne were youre peple in sovereyn
hertès reste.

Boweth youre nekke under that blisful yok
Of soveraynètee, noght of servyse,
Which that men clepeth spousaille or
wedlok,
And thenketh, lord, among youre thoghtès
wyse,
How that oure dayès passe in sondry wyse,
For thogh we slepe, or wake, or rome,
or ryde,
Ay fleeth the tyme, it nyl no man abyde;

^{113.} Chaucer here transfers Petrarch's epithets. 'Collumque non liberum modo sed imperiosum legitimo subicias iugo' is the Latin.

And thogh youre grené youthé floure as
yit, 120
In crepeth age alwey, as stille as stoon,
And Deeth manaceth every age and smyt
In ech estaat, for ther escapeth noon ;
And al so certein as we knowe echoon
That we shul deye, as uncerteyn we alle
Been of that day whan deeth shal on us
falle.

‘Accepteth thanne of us the trewe
entente

That never yet refuseden thyn heeste,
And we wol, lord, if that ye wole assente,
Chese yow a wyf in short tyme attē leeste,
Born of the gentilleste and of the meeste
Of al this land, so that it oghtē seme
Honour to God and yow, as we kan
deeme.

Delivere us out of al this bisy drede,
And taak a wyf, for hyē Goddēs sake ;
For if it so bifelle, as God forbede !
That thurgh youre deeth youre lynē
sholdē slake,

And that a straungē successeur sholde take
Your heritage, O, wo were us alyve !
Wherefore we pray you hastily to wyve.’ 140

Hir meekē preyere, and hir pitous
cheere,

Madē the markys hertē han pitee.
‘Ye wol,’ quod he, ‘myn owēne peplē
deere,

To that I never erst thoughtē streynē me.
I me rejoysed of my libertee,
That seeldē tyme is founde in mariage ;
Ther I was free, I moot been in servage ;

But nathelees, I se youre trewe entente,
And trust upon youre wit, and have
doon ay ;

Wherefore, of my free wyl, I wole assente
To weddē me as soone as ever I may. 151
But ther as ye han profrēd me this day
To chesē me a wyf, I yow relese
That choys, and prey yow of that profrē
cesse,

For, God it woot, that children oftē been
Unlyk hir worthy eldrēs hem bifore ;

Bountee comth al of God, nat of the streen
Of which they been engendred and y-bore.
I truste in Goddēs bontee, and therfore
My mariage, and myn estaat and reste,
I hym bitake,—he may doon as hym leste.

Lat me allone in chesyngē of my wyf—
That charge upon my bak I wol endure ;
But I yow preye, and charge upon yourelyf,
That what wyf that I take, ye me assure
To worshipec hire, whil that hirlyf may dure,
In word and werk, bothe heere and
everywhere,
As she an emperourēs doghter weere ;

And forthermoore, this shal ye swere,
that ye
Agayn my choys shul neither grucche ne
stryve ; 170

For sith I shal forgoon my libertee
At youre requeste, as ever moot I thryve !
Ther as myn herte is set, ther wol I wyve ;
And, but ye wole assente in this manere,
I prey yowspeketh namoore of this matere.’

With hertely wyl they sworn and
assenten

To al this thyng, ther seyde no wight nay ;
Bisekyngē hym of grace, er that they
wenten,

That he wolde graunten hem a certein day
Of his spousaille, as soone as ever he may ;
For yet alwey the peplē somewhat dredde
Lest that this markys no wyf woldē wedde.

He graunten hem a day, swich as hym
leste,

On which he wolde be wedded sikerly,
And seyde he dide al this at hir requeste ;
And they, with humble ententē, buxomly,
Knelyngē upon hir knees ful reverently,
Hym thonken alle ; and thus they han
an ende
Of hire entente, and hoom agayn they
wende.

And heer-upon he to his officerēs 190
Comaundeth for the festē to purveye ;
And to his privee knyghtēs and squierēs

174. And but ye wole, etc., not in Latin.

Swich chargé yaf as hym liste on hem leye ;
 And they to his comandément obeye,
 And ech of hem dooth al his diligence
 To doon unto the feesté reverence.

PART II

Noght fer fro thilké paleys honourable
 Ther as this markys shoope his mariage,
 There stood a throop, of sité delitable,
 In which that pouré folk of that village
 Hadden hir beestés and hir herbergage,
 And of hire labour tooke hir sustenance,
 After the erthé yaf hem habundance. 203

Among thise pouré folk ther dwelte a man
 Which that was holden pourest of hem
 alle,—

But hyé God som tymé senden kan
 His grace into a litel oxés stalle ;
 Janicula, men of that throope hym calle ;
 A doghter hadde he fair ynogh to sighte,
 And Grisildis this yongé mayden highte.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee
 Thanne was she oon the faireste under
 sonne,

For pouréliche y-fostred up was she ;
 No likerous lust was thurgh hire herte
 y-ronne,

Wel ofter of the welle than of the tonne
 She drank, and for she woldé vertu plesce
 She knew wel labour, but noon ydel esc.

But thogh this maydè tendre were of age,
 Yet in the brest of hire virginitee 219
 Ther was enclosed rype and sad corage,
 And in greet reverence and charitee
 Hir oldé, pouré fader fostred shee ;
 A fewé sheepe, spyynnyng, on feeld she
 kepte,
 She woldé noght been ydel til she slepte.

And whan she homward cam she woldé
 bryng

Wortés, or othere herbés, tymés ofte,
 The whiche she shreddie and seeth for hir
 lyvyng,

215-220. Chaucer's addition.

And made hir bed ful harde and no thyng
 softe ;
 And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on-lofte,
 With everich obeisaunce and diligence
 That child may doon to fadres reverence.

Upon Grisilde, this pouré créature,
 Ful ofté sithe this markys sette his eye
 As he on huntynge rood paraventure ;
 And, whan it fil that he myghte hire espye,
 He noght with wantowne lookyng of folye
 His eyén caste on hire, but in sad wyse
 Upon hir chiere he gan hym ofte avyse,

Commendynge in his herte hir womman-
 hede, 239
 And eek hir vertu, passynge any wight
 Of so yong age, as wel in chiere as dede ;
 For thogh the peplé have no greet insight
 In vertu, he considered ful right
 Hir bountee, and disposéd that he wolde
 Wedde hire oonly, if ever he weddè sholde.

The day of weddyng cam, but no wight kan
 Tellé what womman that it sholdé be ;
 For which mervellé wondred many a man,
 And seyden, whan they were in privétee,
 'Wol nat oure lord yet leve his vanytee ?
 Wolhenat wedde ? allas ! allas ! the while !
 Why wole he thus hymself and us bigile ?'

But nathélees this markys hath doon make,
 Of gemmés, set in gold and in asure,
 Broochés and ryngés, for Grisildis sake ;
 And of hir clothynge took he the mesure
 Bý a mayde lyke to hire of stature,
 And eek of othere ornamentés alle
 That unto swich a weddyng sholdé falle.

The time of undern of the samé day
 Approacheth, that this weddyng sholdé be,
 And al the paleys put was in array, 262
 Bothe hall and chambrés, ech in his degree ;
 Houses of office stuffed with plentee,
 Ther maystow seen of deyntéuous vitaille
 That may be founde as fer as last Ytaille.

233. sette, E. caste.

238. gan, H^o wolde.

249-252. Chaucer's addition.

263-266. Chaucer's addition.

This roial markys richely arrayed,
 Lordes and ladyes in his campaignye,
 The whiché to the feesté weren y-prayed,
 And of his retenue the bachelrye, ²⁷⁰
 With many a soun of sondry melodye,
 Unto the village of the which I tolde,
 In this array the righté wey han holde.

Grisilde of this, God woot, ful innocent,
 That for hire shapen was al this array,
 To fecchen water at a welle is went,
 And cometh hoom as soone as ever she
 may ;

For wel she hadde herd seyde that thilké day
 The markys sholdé wedde, and if she
 myghte ²⁷⁹
 She woldé fayn han seyn som of that sighte.

She thoghte, 'I wole with othere maydens
 stonde,

That been my felawes, in oure dore and se
 The markysesse, and therfore wol I fonde
 To doon at hoom as soone as it may be
 The labour which that longeth unto me ;
 And thanne I may at leyser hire biholde
 If she this wey unto the castel holde.'

And as she wolde over hir thressshfold gon
 The markys cam, and gan hire for to calle ;
 And she set down hir water pot anon ²⁹⁰
 Biside the thressshfold in an oxés stalle,
 And doun upon hir knes she gan to falle,
 And with sad contenance knelothe stille
 Til she had herd what was the lordés will.

This thoughtful markysspak unto this mayde
 Ful sobrelly, and seyde in this manere :
 'Where is youre fader, Grisildis?' he
 sayde ;

And she with reverence, in humble cheere,
 Answerde, 'Lord, he is al redy heere' ;
 And in she gooth withouten lenger lette,
 And to the markys she hir fader fette. ³⁰¹

He by the hand thanne took this oldé man,
 And seyde thus, whan he hym hadde asyde,
 'Janicula, I neither may ne kan
 Lenger the plesance of myn herté hyde.

If that thou vouchesauf, what-so bityde,
 Thy doghter wol I take, er that I wende,
 As for my wyf unto hir lyvès ende.

Thou lovest me, I woot it wel certeyn,
 And art my feithful ligé man y-bore, ³¹⁰
 And all that liketh me, I dar wel seyn.
 It liketh thee, and specially therfore,
 Tel me that poynt that I have seyde bifore,
 If that thou wolt unto that purpos drawe,
 To také me as for thy sone-in-lawe.'

This sodeyn cas this man astonyed so
 That reed he wax, abayst, and al quakyng
 He stood ; unnethés seyde he wordés mo,
 But oonly thus : 'Lord,' quod he, 'my
 willyng ³¹⁹
 Is as ye wole, ne ayeynes youre likyng
 I wol no thyng, ye be my lord so deere ;
 Right as yow lust governeth this matere.'

'Yet wol I,' quod this markys softely,
 'That in thy chambre, I, and thou,
 and she,

Have a collacioun, and wostow why ?
 For I wol axe if it hire willé be
 To be my wyf, and reule hire after me ;
 And al this shal be doon in thy presence,
 I wol noght speke out of thyn audience.'

And in the chambre whil they were
 aboute ³³⁰
 Hir tretys, which as ye shal after heere,
 The peple cam unto the hous with-oute,
 And wondred hem in how honeste
 manere,

And tentify, she kepte hir fader deere ;
 But outrély Grisildis wondré myghte,
 For never erst ne saugh she swich a sighte.

No wonder is thogh that she were astoned
 To seen so greet a gest come in that place ;
 She never was to swiché gestés woned,
 For which she looked with ful palé face.
 But, shortly forth this talé for to chace, ³⁴¹
 Thise arn the wordés that the markys sayde
 To this benigné, verray, feithful mayde :

267. *richely*, H² *really* (royally).

281 *sqg.* The form of the soliloquy is Chaucer's.

290-294. Chaucer's addition.

334. *tentify*, H *tendurly*.

340. Chaucer's conventional addition.

341. *talé*, H⁶ *matiere*.

'Grisilde,' he seyde, 'ye shal wel
understonde
It liketh to youre fader and to me
That I yow wedde; and eek it may so
stonde,
As I suppose, ye wol that it so be;
But thise demandès axe I first,' quod he,
'That sith it shal be doon in hastif wyse,
Wol ye assente or ellès yow avyse?' 350

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte
To al my lust, and that I frely may
As me best thynketh do yow laughe or
smerte,
And never ye to grucche it nyght ne day?
And eek whan I sey "ye" ne sey nat
"nay,"
Neither by word, ne frownyng contenance?
Swere this, and heere I swere oure alli-

Wondrynge upon this word, quakyng
for drede,
She seyde, 'Lord, undigne and unworthy
Am I to thilke honour that ye me beede;
But as ye wole youreself, right so wol I, 361
And heere I swere that never willingly
In werk, ne thought, I nyl yow disobeye,
For to be deed, though me were looth to
deye!'

'This is ynogh, Grisildè myn,' quod he,
And forth he gooth with a ful sobré cheere
Out at the dore, and after that cam she,
And to the peple he seyde in this manere:
'This is my wyf,' quod he, 'that standeth
heere; 369
Honoureth hire, and loveth hire, I preye,
Whosome loveth; ther is namoore to seye.'

And for that nothyng of hir oldè gere
She sholdè brynge into his hous, he bad
That wommen sholde dispoillen hire
right there;
Of which thise ladyes werè nat right glad
To handle hir clothès wher-inne she was
clad;
But nathelees this maydè, bright of hewe,
Fro foot to heed they clothèd han al newe.

375, 376. Chaucer here varies needlessly from
Petrarch.

Hir heris han they kembd, that lay un-
tressed
Ful rudely, and with hir fynngres smale 380
A corone on hire heed they han y-dressed,
And sette hire ful of nowches grete and
smale.
Of hire array what sholde I make a tale?
Unnethe the peple hire knew for hire
fairnesse,
Whan she translated was in swich richesse.

This markys hath hire spoused with a
ryng,
Brought for the samè cause, and thanne
hire sette
Upon an hors snow-whit and wel amblyng,
And to his paleys, cr he lenger lette,
With joyful peple that hire ladde and
mette, 390
Convoyèd hire, and thus the day they
spende
In revel til the sonnè gan descende;

And, shortly forth this talè for to chace,
I seye that to this newè markysesse
God hath swich favour sent hire of his
grace,
That it ne semèd nat by liklynesse
That she was born and fed in rudènesse,
As in a cote, or in an oxè stalle,
But norissed in an emperourès halle.

To every wight she woxen is so deere
And worshipful, that folk ther she was
bore, 401
And from hire birthè knewe hire yeer by
yeere,
Unnethè trowèd they, but dorste han swore
That to Janicle of which I spak bfore
She doghter nere, for, as by conjecture,
Hem thoughte she was another créature;

For though that ever vertuous was she,
She was encessèd in swich excellence
Of thewès goode, y-set in heigh bountee,
And so discreet and fair of eloquence, 410
So benigne, and so digne of reverence,
And koudè so the peplès herte embrace,
That ech hire lovede that looked on hir face.

Noght oonly of Saluces in the toun
 Publicèd was the bountee of hir name.
 But eek biside in many a regioun,
 If oon seide wel, another seyde the same.
 So spradde of hire heighe bountee the fame
 That men and wommen, as wel yonge as
 olde,
 Goon to Saluce upon hire to bihold. 420

Thus Walter lowely—nay, but roially—
 Wedded with fortunat honestétee,
 In Goddès pees lyveth ful esily
 At hoom, and outward grace ynogh had he;
 And for he saugh that under lowe degree
 Was oft vertu hid, the peple hym heelde
 A prudent man, and that is seyn ful seelde.

Nat oonly this Grisildis thurgh hir wit
 Koude al the feet of wyfly homlynesse,
 But eek, whan that the cas requirèd it, 430
 The commune profit kouldè she redresse;
 Ther nas discord, rancour, ne hevynesse,
 In al that land, that she ne koude aperse,
 And wisely brynge hem alle in reste
 and ese.

Though that hire housbonde absent were
 anon,
 If gentil men or othere of hire contree
 Were wrothè, she wolde brynggenhem aton;
 So wise and rypè wordès haddè she,
 And juggémentz of so greet equitee,
 That she from hevène sent was, as men
 wende, 440
 Peplè to save and every wrong tamende.

Nat longè tyme after that this Grisild
 Was wedded, she a doghter hath y-bore,
 Al had hire levere have born a knavè child.
 Glad was this markys and the folk ther-
 fore,
 For though a maydè child coome al bifore,
 She may unto a knavè child atteyne,
 By liklihede, syn she nys nat barcyne.

PART III

Ther fil, as it bifalleth tymés mo,
 Whan that this child had soukèd but a
 throwe, 450

415. *bountee, E. beautee.*

This markys in his hertè longeth so
 To tempte his wyf, hir sadnesse for to
 knowe,
 That he ne myghte out of his hertè throwe
 This merveillous desir his wyf tassaye;
 Nedelees, God woot, he thoughte hire for
 taffraye.

He hadde assayed hire ynogh bifore,
 And foond hire ever goode,— what
 neded it
 Hire for to tempte, and alwey moore and
 moore?
 Though som men preise it for a subtil wit,
 But as for me, I seye that yvele it sit 460
 To assaye a wyf whan that it is no nede,
 And putten hire in angwyssh and in drede.

For which this markys wroghte in this
 manere;
 He cam allone a nyght, ther as she lay,
 With stiernè face and with ful trouble
 cheere,
 And seyde thus: 'Grisilde,' quod he,
 'that day
 That I yow took out of youre poure array
 And putte yow in estaat of heigh
 noblesse,—
 Ye have nat that forgeten, as I gesse?

I seye, Grisilde, this present dignitee 470
 In which that I have put yow, as I trowe,
 Maketh yow nat forgetful for to be
 That I yow took in poure estaat ful lowe;
 For any wele ye moot youreselfen knowe;
 Taak heede of every word that I yow seye,
 Ther is no wight that hereth it but we
 tweye.

Ye woot youreself wel how that ye cam
 heere
 Into this hous, it is nat longe ago,
 And though to me that ye be lief and
 deere,
 Unto my gentils ye be no thyng so; 480
 They seyn to hem it is greet shame and wo
 For to be subgetz, and been in servage,
 To thee, that born art of a smal village;

460. Chaucer is here much more emphatic than
 Petrarch.

And namely sith thy doghter was y-bore
 Thise wordès han they spoken, doutèlees ;
 But I desire, as I have doon bifore,
 To lyve my lyf with hem in reste and pees ;
 I may nat in this caas be recchèlees,
 I moot doon with thy doghter for the
 beste,
 Nat as I wolde, but as my peplé leste ; 490

And yet, God woot, this is ful looth to
 me ;
 But nathèlees withoutè youre wityng
 I wol nat doon, but this wol I, ' quod he,
 ' That ye to me assente, as in this thyng.
 Shewe now youre pacience in youre
 werkynge,
 That ye me highte and swore in youre
 village,
 That day that makéd was oure mariage. '

Whan she had herd al this she noght
 ameded,
 Neither in word, or chiere, or coun-
 tenaunce,
 For as it seméd she was nat agreved. 500
 She seyde, ' Lord, al lyth in youre
 plesaunce ;
 My child and I, with hertely obeisaunce,
 Been yourès al, and ye mowe save or spille
 Youré owene thyng ; werketh after youré
 wille.

Ther may no-thing, God so my soulé
 save !
 Liken to yow that may displesé me ;
 Ne I desiré no-thing for to have,
 Ne dredé for to leese, save only yee ;
 This wyl is in myn herte, and ay shal be.
 No lengthe of tyme, or deeth, may this
 deface, 510
 Ne chaunge my corage to another place. '

Glad was this markys of hire answeyng,
 But yet he feynéd as he were nat so ;
 Al drery was his cheere and his lookyng,
 Whan that he sholde out of the chambré
 go.
 Soone after this, a furlong wey or two,
 He privily hath toold al his entent
 Unto a man, and to his wyf hym sente.

A maner sergeant was this privee man,
 The which that feithful ofte he founden
 hadde 520
 In thyngès grete, and eek swich folk wel
 kan
 Doon execucioun in thyngès badde ;
 The lord knew wel that he hym loved
 and dradde :
 And whan this sergeant wiste his lordès
 wille,
 Into the chambre he stalkéd hym ful stille.

' Madame, ' he seyde, ' ye moote foryeve
 it me,
 Though I do thyng to which I am
 constreynéd ;
 Ye been so wys, that ful wel knowé ye
 That lordès heestés mowe nat been
 y-feyned :
 They mowe wel been biwailléd and
 compleynéd, 530
 But men moote nede unto hire lust obeye,
 And so wol I ; ther is namore to seye.

This child I am comanded for to take, '—
 And spak namore but out the child he
 hente
 Despitously, and gan a cheeré make
 As though he wolde han slayn it er he
 wente.
 Grisildis moot al suffren and consente ;
 And as a lamb she sitteth meke and
 stille,
 And leet this cruuel sergeant doon his
 wille.

Suspecious was the diffame of this man,
 Suspect his face, suspect his word also, 541
 Suspect the tyme in which he this bigan ;
 Allas, hir doghter that she lovéd so,
 She wende he wolde han slawen it right
 tho ;
 But nathèlees she neither weepe ne syked,
 Consentynge hire to that the markys lyked ;

But atté laste to speken she bigan,
 And mekely she to the sergeant preyde,

546. *Consentyng, H^o Conformyng.*

So as he was a worthy gentil man,
That she moste kisse hire child er that it
deyde.

And in hir barm this litel child she leyde ⁵⁵⁰
With ful sad face, and gan the child to
blisse,

And lulled it, and after gan it kisse ;

And thus she seyde in hire benigne voys,
'Fareweel, my child, I shal thee never
see !

But sith I thee have markéd with the croys,
Of thilké Fader, blessed moote he be,
That for us deyde up on a croys of tree.
Thy soulé, litel child, I hym bitake, ⁵⁵⁹
For this nyght shaltow dyen for my sake.'

I trowe that to a norice in this cas
It had been hard this reuthé for to se ;
Wel myghte a mooder thanne han cryd,
allas !

But nathéless, so sad stidefast was she,
That she enduréd al adversitee,
And to the sergeant mekely she sayde,
'Have heer agayn youre litel yongé
mayde ;

Gooth now,' quod she, 'and dooth my
lordés heeste ;

But o thyng wol I prey yow of youre grace,
That, but my lord forbad yow, atté leeste
Burieth this litel body in som place ⁵⁷¹
That beestés, ne no briddés, it to-race' ;
But he no word wol to that purpos seye,
But took the child and wente upon his
weye.

This sergeant cam unto his lord ageyn,
And of Grisildis wordés and hire cheere
He tolde hym point for point, in short
and pleyne,

And hym presenteth with his doghter
deere.

Somwhat this lord hath routhe in his
manere,

But nathéless his purpos heeld he stille, ⁵⁸⁰

^{554-560.} Chaucer's addition, though Petrarch
mentions the signing with the cross.

^{567.} This pretty line is Chaucer's addition.

As lordés doon whan they wol han hir
wille ;

And bad his sergeant that he pryvely
Sholdé this child ful softé wynde and
wrappe

With allé circumstances, tendrely,
And carie it in a cofre, or in a lappe ;
But, upon peyne his heed of for to swappe,
That no man sholdé knowe of his entente,
Ne whenne he cam, ne whider that he
wente ;

But at Boloigné to his suster deere,
That thilké tyme of Panik was countesse,
He sholde it take, and shewe hire this
mateere, ⁵⁹¹

Bisekyngé hire to doon hire bisynesse
This child to fostre in allé gentillesse ;
And whos child that it was he bad hir hyde
From every wight for oght that may bityde.

The sergeant gooth, and hath fulfild
this thyng ;

But to this markys now retourné we,
For now gooth he ful faste ymaginyng
If by his wyv's cheere he myghté se,
Or by hire word aperceyvè, that she ⁶⁰⁰
Were chaungéd ; but he never hire kouldé
fynde

But ever in oon yliké sad and kynde,

As glad, as humble, as bisy in servyse,
And eek in love, as she was wont to be,
Was she to hym in every maner wyse ;
Ne of hir doghter nought a word spak she.
Noon accident for noon adversitee
Was seyn in hire, ne never hir doghter
name

Ne nempnéd she, in ernest nor in game.

PART IV

In this estaat ther passéd been foure yeer
Er she with childé was ; but, as God wolde,

^{581.} Chaucer's comment.

^{589.} *Boloigne*, Bologna.

^{590.} *Panik*, E⁵ *Pavlyk*, *Pavie* ; 'Comiti de
Panico' in Petrarch.

^{607-609.} An unhappy translation of Petrarch's
'nunquam siue ex proposito siue incidenter nomen
eius ex ore matris auditum.'

A knave child she bar by this Walter,
 Ful gracious and fair for to biholde ;
 And whan that folk it to his fader tolde,
 Nat oonly he, but al his contree, merye
 Was for this child, and God they thanke
 and herye.

Whan it was two year old, and fro the brest
 Departed of his norice, on a day
 This markys caughte yet another lest
 To tempte his wyf yet offer, if he may. 620
 O, nedelees was she tempted in assay !
 But wedded men ne knowe no mesure
 Whan that they fynde a pacient creature !

'Wyf,' quod this markys, 'ye han
 herd er this
 My peplè sikly berth oure mariage,
 And namely sith my sone y-boren is,
 Now is it worse than ever in al oure age.
 The murmure sleeth myn herte and my
 corage ;
 For to myne erès comth the voys so smerte
 That it wel ny destroyed hath myn herte.

'Now sey they thus : "Whan Walter
 is agon 631
 Thanne shal the blood of Janicle succede,
 And been oure lord, for oother have we
 noon" ;
 Swiche wordès seith my peplè, out of drede,
 Weloughte I of swich murmur taken heede,
 For certainly I dredè swich sentence,
 Though they nat pleyn speke in myn
 audience.

I woldè lyve in pees, if that I myghte,
 Wherefore I am disposèd outcly,
 As I his suster servèdè by nyghte, 640
 Right so thanke I to serve hym pryvely.
 This warne I yow, that ye nat sodeynly
 Out of youreself for no wosholde outreye—
 Beth pacient, and ther-of I yow preye.'

'I have,' quod she, 'seyd thus, and
 ever shal,
 I wol no thyng, ne nyl no thyng, certayn,
 But as yow list ; naught greveth me at al

Though that my doughter and my sone
 be slayn

At youre comandèment ; this is to sayn,
 I have noght had no part of children
 tweyne, 650

But first siknesse and after wo and payne.

Ye been oure lord, dooth with youre
 owene thyng

Right as yow list,—axeth no reed at me,
 For as I lefte at hoom al my clothyng
 Whan I first cam to yow, rightso, 'quod she,
 'Lefte I my wyl, and al my libertee,
 And took youre clothyng ; wherefore I
 yow preye,

Dooth youre plesaunce, I wol youre lust
 obeye.

And certès, if I haddè prescience
 Your wyl to knowe er ye youre lust me
 tolde, 660

I wolde it doon withouten necligence ;
 But now I woot youre lust and what ye
 wolde,

Al youre plesancè ferme and stable I holde ;
 For wiste I that my deeth wolde do yow ese,
 Right gladly wolde I dyen, yow to plesè ;

Deth may noght makè no comparisoun
 Unto youre love ; and whan this markys say
 The constance of his wyf, he caste adoun
 His eyen two, and wondreth that she may
 In paciencè suffre al this array ; 670
 And forth he goth with drery contenance,
 But to his herte it was ful greet plesance.

This ugly sergeant, in the samè wyse
 That he hire doghter caughtè, right so he,
 Or worsè, if men worsè kan devyse,
 Hath hent hire sone that ful was of beautee.
 And ever in oon so pacient was she
 That she no chierè maade of hevynesse,
 But kiste hir sone, and after gan it blesse ;

Save this : she preydè hym, that, if he
 myghte, 680
 Hir litel sone he wolde in erthè grave,
 His tendrè lymès, delicaat to sighte,

Fro fowelés and fro beestés for to save ;
 But she noon answe're of hym myghté have ;
 He wente his wey, as hym nothyng ne
 roghte,
 But to Boloigne he tendrely it broghte.

This markys wondred ever lenger the
 'moore

Upon hir pacience, and if that he
 Ne haddé soothly knowén ther-bifore
 That partlytly hir children lovéd she, ⁶⁹⁰
 He wolde have wend that of som subtiltee,
 And of malice, or for cruell corage,
 That she haddesuffréd this with sad visage ;

But wel he knew, that next hymself, certayn
 She lovéd hir children best in every wyse.
 But now of wommen wolde I axen fayn
 If this assayés myghté nat suffice ?
 What koude a sturdy housbonde moore
 devyse

To preeve hire wyfhod and hir stedefast-
 nesse, ⁶⁹⁹
 And he continuynge ever in sturdiness ?

But ther been folk of swich condicioun
 That whan they have a certein purpos take,
 They kan nat stynte of hire entencioun,
 But, right as they were bounden to that
 stake,

They wol nat of that firsté purpos slake.
 Right so this markys fullliche hath purposed
 To tempte his wyf as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by word or contenance,
 That she to hym was changéd of corage ;
 But never koude he fyndé variance : ⁷¹⁰
 She was ay oon in herte and in visage,
 And ay the forthier that she was in age
 The mooré trewe, if that it were possible,
 She was to hym in love, and moore penyble ;

For which it seméd thus that of hem two
 Ther nas but o wyl, for as Walter leste,
 The samé lust was hire plesance also ;
 And, God be thankéd, al fil for the beste.
 She shewéd wel, for no worldly unreste
 A wyf, as of herself, no thing ne sholde ⁷²⁰
 Wille in effect, but as hir housbonde wolde.

^{696.} It is Chaucer who addresses the query to
women.

The sclandre of Walter ofte and wydè
 spradde,

That of a cruell herte he wikkedly,
 For he a pouré womman wedded hadde,
 Hath mordred bothe his children prively.
 Swich murmure was among hem comunly.
 No wonder is, for to the peplés ere
 Ther cam no word but that they mordred
 were ;

For which, where-as his peplé ther-bifore
 Hadde lovéd hym wel, the sclandre of
 his diffame ⁷³⁰

Made hem that they hym hatedé therfore.
 To been a mordrere is an hateful name,
 But nathelees, for earnest ne for game,
 He of his cruell purpos noldé stente ;
 To tempte his wyf was set al his entente.

Whan that his doghter twelf yeer was
 of age

He to the court of Rome, in subtil wyse
 Enforméd of his wyl, sente his message,
 Comaundyng hem swiche bullés to devyse
 As to his cruell purpos may suffice, ⁷⁴⁰
 How that the pope, as for his peplés reste,
 Bad hym to wedde another, if hym leste.

I seye, he bad they sholdé countrefete
 The popés bullés, makyng mencioun
 That he hath leve his firsté wyf to lete,
 As by the popés dispensacioun,
 To stynté rancour and dissencioun
 Bitwixe his peple and hym ; thus seyde
 the bulle,

The which they han publicéd atté fulle.

The rudé peple, as it no wonder is, ⁷⁵⁰
 Wenden ful wel that it hadde be right so ;
 But whan thise tidynges cam to Grisildis
 I deemé that hire herté was ful wo ;
 But she—yliké sad for evermo—
 Disposéd was, this humble créature
 The adversitee of Fortune al tendure,

Abidyng ever his lust and his plesance
 To whom that she was yeven herte and al,
 As to hire verray worldly suffisance. ⁷⁵⁹

^{754.} *sad*, constant ; Petrarch's 'inconcussa.'

But, shortly if this storie I tellen shal,
This markys writen hath in special
A lettre, in which he sheweth his entente,
And secreely he to Boloigne it sente.

To the erl of Panyk, which that haddé tho
Wedded his suster, preyde he specially
To bryngen hoom agayn his children two
In honourable estaat al openly ;
But o thyng he hym preyde outrely,
That he to no wight, though men wolde
enquere, 769
Sholdé nat tellé whos children they were

But seye, the mayden sholde y-wedded be
Unto the markys of Saluce anon.

And as this erl was preyed, so dide he ;
For at day set he on his wey is goon
Toward Saluce, and lordés many oon
In riche array, this mayden for to gyde,
Hir yongé brother ridynge hire bisyde.

Arrayed was toward hir mariage
This fresshé maydē ful of gemmés cleere.
Hir brother, which that seven yeer was
of age, 780
Arrayed eek ful fressh in his manere ;
And thus in greet noblesse and with glad
cheere,
Toward Saluces shapyngē hir journey,
Fro day to day they ryden in hir wey.

PART V

Among al this, after his wikke usage,
This markys, yet his wyf to tempté moore,
To the utterest preeve of hir corage,
Fully to han experience and loore
If that she were as stidefast as bifoore,
He on a day, in open audience, 790
Ful boistously hath seyde hire this sentence :

‘ Certés, Grisilde, I hadde ynogh plesance
To han yow to my wyf for youre goodnesse,
As for youre trouthe and for youre obeis-
ance,

764. *Panyk*, E⁵ *Pavyk*, *Pavie*.

770. *they*, E *that they*.

777. *hire bisyde*, H⁵ *by hir syde*.

Noght for youre lynage, ne for youre
richesse :

But now knowe I in verray soothfastnesse
That in greet lordshipe, if I wel avyse,
Ther is greet servitude, in sondry wyse.

I may nat doon as every plowman may,—
My peplé me constreyneth for to take 800
Another wyf, and crien day by day,
And eek the popé, rancour for to slake,
Consenteth it, that dar I undertake ;
And trewéliche thusmuche I wol yow seye,
My newé wyf is comynge by the weye.

Bestrong of herte, and voyde anon hir place,
And thilké doweré that ye broghten me,
Taak it agayn, I graunte it of my grace.
Retourneth to youre fadrés hous,’ quod he,
‘ No man may alwey han prosperitee. 810
With evene herte I redé yow tendure
This strook of Fortune or of aventure.’

And she answerde agayn in pacience :
‘ My lord,’ quod she, ‘ I woot and wiste
alway

How that bitwixen youre magnificence
And my poverté no wight kan ne may
Maken comparisoun, it is no nay ;
I ne heeld me never digne in no manere
To be youre wyf, no, ne youre chamberere ;

And in this houstheryeme lady maade, 820
The heighé God take I for my wisesse,
And also wysly he my soule glaade !
I never heeld me lady, ne maistresse,
But humble servant to youre worthynesse,
And ever shal, whil that my lyf may dure,
Aboven every worldly créature.

That ye so longe, of youre benignitee,
Han holden me in honour and nobleye,
Where as I was noght worthy for to bee,
That thonke I God, and yow, to whom I
preye 830
Foryelde it yow ; ther is namoore to seye ;
Unto my fader gladly wol I wende
And with hym dwelle unto my lyvés ende.

808. *I graunte it of my grace*. Petrarch only
has ‘ dotem tuam referens.’

811, 812. Chaucer’s expansion of ‘ æqua mente.’

Ther I was fostréd of a child ful smal,
 Til I be deed my lyf ther wol I lede,
 A wydwe clene, in body, herte and al ;
 For sith I yaf to yow my maydenhede,
 And am youre trewe wyf, it is no drede,
 God shildé swich a lordés wyf to take 839
 Another man to housbonde or to make ;

And of youre newé wyf God of his grace
 So graunté yow wele and prosperitee ;
 For I wol gladly yelden hire my place,
 In which that I was blisful wont to bee ;
 For sith it liketh yow, my lord, 'quod shee,
 ' That whilom weren al myn hertés reste,
 That I shal goon, I wol goon whan yow leste.

But ther as ye me profre swich dowaire
 As I first broghte, it is wel in my mynde
 It were my wrecchéd clothés, no thyng faire,
 The whiche to me were hard now for to
 fynde. 851
 O goodé God, how gentil and how kynde
 Ye seméd by youre speche and youre visage
 The day that makéd was oure mariage !

But sooth is seyde, algate I fynde it trewe,
 For in effect it preceved is on me,
 Love is noght oold as whan that it is newe !
 But certés, lord, for noon adversitee,
 To dyen in the cas, it shal nat bee 859
 That ever in word or werk I shal repente
 That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente.

My lord, ye woot that in my fadrés place
 Ye dide me streepe out of my pouré weede,
 And richely me cladden of youre grace.
 To yow broghte I noght ellés, out of drede,
 But feith and nakednesse and maydenhede ;
 And heere agayn my clothyng I restoore,
 And eek my wedding ryng, for evermore.

The remenant of youre jueles redy be 869
 In-with youre chambré, dar I saufully sayn.
 Naked out of my fadrés hous, 'quod she,
 ' I cam and naked moot I turne agayn ;
 Al youre plesancé wol I folwen fayn ;

836-840. Expanded from Petrarch's 'Felix
 semper et honorabilis vidua, quæ viri talis uxor
 fuerim.'

853-860. Chaucer's addition.

866. *nakednesse*, H² *mekenes*.

But yet I hope it be nat youre entente
 That I smoklees out of youre paleys wente.

Ye koude nat doon so dishoneste a thyng,
 That thilké wombe in which youre children
 leye

Sholdé bifrom the peple, in my walkyng,
 Be seyn al baré, wherfore I yow preye,
 Iat me nat lyk a worm go by the weye.
 Remembre yow, myn owene lord, so deere,
 I was youre wyf, though I unworthy weere ;

Wherfore in gerdoun of my maydenhede
 Which that I broghte, and noght agayn I
 bere,

As vouchethsauf to yeve me to my meede
 But swich a smok as I was wont to were,
 That I ther-with may wrye the wombe of
 here

That was youre wyf ; and heer take I my
 leevé

Of yow, myn owene lord, lest I yow greve.'

'The smok,' quod he, 'that thou hast on
 thy bak, 890

Lat it be stille, and bere it forth with thee.'
 But wel unnethés thilké word he spak,
 But wente his wey, for routhe and for pitee.

Bifrom the folk hirselves strepeth she,
 And in her smok, with heed and foot al
 bare,

Toward hir fader hous forth is she fare.

The folk hire folwé wepyng in hir weye,
 And Fortune ay they cursen as they goon ;
 But she fro wepyng kepte hire eyen dreye,
 Ne in this tymé word ne spak she noon.

Hir fader, that this tidynge herde anon,
 Curseth the day and tymé that nature
 Shoope hym to been a lyvés creature ;

For out of doute this oldé pouré man
 Was ever in suspect of hir mariage ;
 For ever he deméd, sith that it bigan,
 That whan the lord fulfild hadde his corage,
 Hym woldé thynke it were a disparage
 To his estaat, so lowé for talighte,
 And voyden hire as soone as ever he
 myghte. 910

888. *and heer*, etc., Chaucer's addition.

Agayns his doghter hastiliche goth he,
 For he by noyse of folk knew hire
 comynge,
 And with hire oldé coote, as it myghte be,
 He covered hire ful sorwefully wepynge;
 But on hire body myghte he it nat brynge,
 For rudé was the clooth and moore of age
 By deyés fele than at hire mariage.

Thus with hire fader, for a certeyn space,
 Dwelleth this flour of wyfly pacience, ⁹¹⁹
 That neither by hire wordés ne hire face,
 Biforn the folk, ne eek in hire absence,
 Ne shewéd she that hire was doon offence;
 Ne of hire heighe estaat no remembraunce
 Ne haddé she, as by hire contenaunce.

No wonder is, for in hire grete estaat,
 Hire goost was ever in pleyn humylitee;
 No tendré mouth, noon herté delicaat,
 No pompé, no semblant of roialtee;
 But ful of pacient benygnytee,
 Discreet and pridélees, ay honourable, ⁹³⁰
 And to hire housbonde ever meke and
 stable.

Men speke of Job, and moost for his
 humblesse,
 As clerkés, whan hem list, konne wel
 endite,
 Namely of men, but as in soothfastnesse,
 Though clerkés preisé women but a lite,
 Ther kan no man in humblesse hym
 acquite
 As women kan, ne kan been half so
 trewe
 As women been, but it be falle of newe.

PART VI

Fro Boloigne is this erl of Panyk come,
 Of which the fame up sprang to moore
 and lesse, ⁹⁴⁰
 And to the peplés erés, alle and some,
 Was kouth eek that a newé markysesse

^{915-917.} Chaucer's perverse expansion of 'atritam senio.'

^{932-938.} Chaucer's addition, in apparent forgetfulness that it is a Clerk who is speaking.

He with hym broghte, in swich pompe
 and richesse,
 That never was ther seyn with mannés eye
 So noble array in al West Lumbardy.

The markys, which that shoope and
 knew al this,
 Er that this erl was come, sente his message
 For thilké sely, pouré Grisildis;
 And she with humbléherthe and glad visage,
 Nat with no swollen thought in hire corage,
 Cam at his heste, and on hire knees hire
 sette, ⁹⁵¹
 And reverently and wisely she hym grette.

'Grisilde,' quod he, 'my wyl is, outrely,
 This mayden, that shal wedded be to me,
 Receivéd be to-morwe as roially
 As it possible is in myn hous to be,
 And eek that every wight in his degree
 Have his estaat in sitting and servyse
 And heigh plesaunce as I kan best devyse.

I have no wommen suffisaunt, certayn, ⁹⁶⁰
 The chambrés for tarraye in ordinaunce
 After my lust, and therefore wolde I fayn
 That thyn were al swich manere govern-
 aunce;
 Thou knowest eek of old al my plesaunce;
 Thogh thyn array be badde and yvel biseye,
 Do thou thy devoir at the leesté weye.'

'Nat oonly, lord, that I am glad,' quod
 she,
 'To doon youre lust, but I desire also
 Yow for to serve and plesé in my degree
 Withouten feynting, and shal evermo;
 Ne never for no welé, ne no wo, ⁹⁷¹
 Ne shal the goost withinne myn herté
 stente
 To love yow best, with al my trewe
 entente.'

And with that word she gan the hous to
 dighte,
 And tables for to sette and beddés make,
 And peynéd hire to doon al that she
 myghte,
 Preyynge the chambrérès for Goddés sake

To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake ;
And she the moosté servysable of alle
Hath every chambre arrayéd and his halle.

Abouten undern gan this erl alighte 981
That with him broghte thise noble children
tweye,

For which the peple ran to seen the sighte
Of hire array, so richely biseye ;
And thanne at erst amongés hem theyseye,
That Walter was no fool, thogh that hym
leste

To chaunge his wyf, for it was for the
beste ;

For she is fairer, as they deemen alle,
Than is Grisilde, and moore tendre of age,
And fairer fruyt bitwene hem sholdé falle,
And moore plesant, for hire heigh lynage ;
Hir brother eek so faire was of visage
That hem to seen the peple hath caught
plesaunce,
Commendynge now the markys govern-
aunce.—

Auctor. 'O stormy peple ! unsad, and
ever untrewc !

Ay undiscreef, and chaungynge as a vane,
Delitynge ever in rumbul that is newe ;
For lyk the moone ay wexé ye and wane !
Ay ful of clappyng, decre ynogh a jane !
Youre doom is fals, youre constance yvele
preeveth, 1000
A ful greet fool is he that on yow leeveth. ,

Thus seyden saddé folk in that citee
Whan that the peple gazéd up and down,—
For they were glad, right for the noveltee,
To han a newé lady of hir toun.
Namore of this make I now mencion,
But to Grisilde agayn wol I me dresse,
And telle hir constance and hir bisynesse.—

Ful bisy was Grisilde in every thyng
'That to the feesté was apertinent ; 1010
Right noght was she abayst of hire clothyng,

993. *the peple.* Petrarch merely says 'erantque
qui dicerebant.' The next two stanzas are Chaucer's
addition (marked *Auctor* in E²), inserted in revis-
ing the tale.

Thogh it were rude and somdeel eek to-
rent,

But with glad cheere to the gate is went
With oother folk to greeten the markysse,
And after that dooth forth hire bisynesse.

With so glad chiere his gestés she re-
ceyveth,

And konnyngly, everich in his degree,
That no defaulté no man aperceyveth,
But ay they wondren what she myghté bec
That in so poure array was for to see, 1020
And koudé swich honóur and reverence,
And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

In al this meené-while she ne stente
This mayde, and eek hir brother, to com-
mende

With al hir herte, in ful benygne entente,
Sowel that no man koude hir pris amende ;
But atté laste whan that thise lordés wende
To sitten down to mete, he gan to calle
Grisilde, as she was bisy in his halle.

'Grisilde,' quod he, as it were in his pley,
'How liketh thee my wyf, and hire beautee ?'
'Right wel,' quod she, 'my lord, for, in
good fey

A fairer saugh I never noon than she ;
I prey to God yeve hire prosperitee ;
And so hope I that he wol to yow sende
Plesance ynogh unto youre lyvés ende.

O thyng biseke I yow, and warne also,
That ye ne prikké with no tormentynge
This tendré mayden, as ye han doon mo ;
For she is fostréd in hire norissynge 1040
Moore tendrely, and, to my supposynge,
She koudé nat adversitee endure
As koude a pouré fostréd creature.'

And whan this Walter saugh hire pacience,
Hir gladé chiere, and no malice at al,
And he so ofte had doon to hire offence
And she ay sad and constant as a wal,
Continuynge ever hire innocence overal,

1039. *me, more, others ;* cp. Petrarch 'ne hanc
illis aculeis agites, quibus alteram agitasti.'
Even now she will not say 'me.'

This sturdy markys gan his hertè dresse
To rewen upon hire wyfly stedfastnesse.

'This is ynogh, Grisildè myn,' quod he,
'Be now namoore agast, ne yvele apayed;
I have thy feith and thy benyngnytee,
As wel as ever womman was, assayed,
In greet estaat and pourèliche arrayed.
Now knowe I, goodè wyf, thy stedfast-
nesse';

And hire in armès took, and gan hire kesse.

And she for wonder took of it no keepe,
She herdè nat what thyng he to hire seyde,
She ferde, as she had stert out of a sleepe,
Til she out of hire mazèdnesse abreyde. 1061
'Grisilde,' quod he, 'by God that for us
deyde,

Thou art my wyf, ne noon oother I have,
Ne never hadde, as God my soulè save !

This is thy doghter, which thou hast
supposed

To be my wyf,—that oother feithfully
Shal be myn heir, as I have ay purposed;
Thou bare hym in thy body trewely;
At Boloigne have I kept hem prively.
Taak hem agayn, for now maystow nat seye
That thou hast lorn noon of thy children
tweye; 1071

And folk that ootherweys han seyde of me,
I warne hem wel that I have doon this deede
For no malice, ne for no crueltee,
But for tassaye in thee thy wommanheede,
And nat to sleen my children, God forbeede!
But for to kepe hem prively and stille
Til I thy purpos knewe and al thy wille.'

Whan she this herde, aswownè doun she
falleth 1079

For pitous joye, and after hire swownynge
She bothe hire yongè children to hire
calloth,

And in hire armès, pitously wepynge,
Embraceth hem, and tendrèly kysynge,
Ful lyk a mooder, with hire saltè teeres
She bathèd bothe hire visage and hire
heeres.

1056. *goodè, H⁶ dere.*

1084. *Ful lyk a mooder, Chaucer's phrase.*

O which a pitous thyng it was to se
Hir swownynge, and hire humble voys to
heere !

'*Graunt mercy*, lord ! that thanke I yow,'
quod she,

'That ye han savèd me my children deere.
Now rekke I never to been deed right
heere, 1090

Sith I stonde in youre love and in youre
grace.

No fors of deeth, ne whan my spirit pace !

O tendre, O deere, O yongè children myne!
Youre woful mooder wendè stedfastly
That crueel houndès, or som foul vermyne,
Hadde eten yow ; but God, of his mercy,
And youre benyngnè fader, tendrèly
Ilath doon yow kept'—and in that samè
stounde

Al sodeynly she swapte adoun to grounde ;

And in hire swough so sadly holdeth she
Hire children two, whan she gan hem
tembrace,

That with greet sleighte, and greet
difficultee

The children from hire arm they goone
arace.

O many a teere on many a pitous face
Doun ran, of hem that stooden hire bisyde;
Unnethe abouten hire myghte they abyde!

Walter hire gladeth, and hire sorwèslaketh;
She riseth up, abaysèd, from hire traunce,
And every wight hire joye and feeste
maketh, 1109

Til she hath caught agayn hire contenance.
Walter hire dooth so feithfully plesaunce
That it was deyntee for to seen the cheere
Bitwixe hem two, now they been met yfeere.

Thise ladyes, whan that they hir tymèsaye,
Han taken hire and into chambrè gon,
And strepen hire out of hire rude array,
And in a clooth of gold that brightè shoon,
With a coroune of many a richè stoon

1086-1113. Chaucer's addition.

1088. *that thanke I yow, H⁶ God thank it*
(thanke) you, God I thank it (thank) you.

Upon hire heed, they into halle hire
broughte, 1119
And ther she was honuréd as hire oghte.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende,
For every man and womman dooth his
myght

This day in murthe and revel to dispende,
Til on the welkné shoon the sterrés lyght;
For more solempne in every mannés syght
This festé was, and gretter of costage,
Than was the revel of hire mariage.

Ful many a yeer in heigh prosperitee
Lyven thise two in concord and in reste,
And richely his doghter maryed he 1130
Unto a lord, oon of the worthieste
Of al Ytaille; and thanne in pees and reste,
His wyvés fader in his court he kepeth,
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage
In reste and pees after his fader day,
And fortunat was eek in mariage;
Al putte he nat his wyf in greet assay.
This world is nat so strong, it is no nay,
As it hath been of oldé tymés yore; 1140
And herkneth what this auctour seith
therfoore.

This storie is seyde, nat for that wyvés
sholde
Folwen Grisilde as in humylitee,
For it were inportable, though they
wolde,—
But for that every wight in his degree
Sholdé be constant in adversitee
As was Grisildé, therfore Petrak writeth
This storie, which with heigh stile he
enditeth;

For sith a womman was so pacient 1149
Unto a mortal man, wel moore us oghte
Receyven al in gree that God us sent,
Forgreet skile is he preveé that he wroghte.

1124. *lyght*, H⁴ *bright*.

1140. *of*, H⁶ *in*.

1141. *this auctour*, Petrarch, who added the moralizing of the next three stanzas to Boccaccio's tale.

But he ne tempteth no man that he boghte,
As seith Seint Jame, if ye his pistel rede.
He preeveth folk al day, it is no drede,

And suffreth us, as for oure exercise,
With sharpe scourges of adversitee
Ful ofté to be bete in sondry wise,
Nat for to know oure wyl, for certés he,
Er we were born, knew al oure frelétée;
And for oure beste is al his governaunce;
Lat us thanne lyve in vertuous suffraunce.

But o word, lordynges, herkneth, er I go:
It were ful hard to fynde now-a-dayes
In al a toun Grisildis thre or two;
For if that they were put to swiche assayes,
The gold of hem hath now so badde alayes
With bras, that though the coyne be fair at eye
It woldé rather breste a-two than plye;

For which heere, for the Wyvés love of
Bathe,— 1170
Whos lyf and al hire secté God mayntene
In heigh maistric, and ellés were it scathe,—
I wol with lusty herte, fressh and grene,
Seyn yow a song, to gladdé yow, I wene;
And lat us stynte of earnestful matere:
Herkneth my song that seith in this manere.

Lenvoy de Chaucer

Grisilde is deed, and eek hire pacience,
And bothe atonés buried in Ytaille;
For which I crie in open audience,
No wedded man so hardy be tassaille 1180
His wyvés pacience in hope to fynde
Grisildis, for in certein he shal faille!

O noble wyvés, ful of heigh prudence,
Lat noon humylitee youre tonge naill,
Ne lat no clerk have cause or diligence
To write of yow a storie of swich mervaille
As of Grisildis pacient and kynde,
Lest *Chichivache* yow swelwe in hire
entraille!

1163. *Butoword*. What follows is all Chaucer's. Its unsuitableness to the Clerk has often been noticed.

1188. *Chichivache*, the lean cow who fed on patient wives, while her mate Bycorne grew fat on humble husbands. A corruption of *chichefache*, lean-faced.

Folweth Ekko, that holdeth no silence,
But ever answereth at the countretaille.
Beth nat bidaffed for youre innocence, ¹¹⁹¹
But sharply taak on yow the governaille.
Emprenteth wel this lessoun in youre mynde
For commune profit sith it may availle.

Ye archiwyvès stondeth at defense,
Syn ye be strong as is a greet camaille,
Ne suffreth nat that men yow doon offense;
And sklendré wyvès, fieble, as in bataille,
Beth egre as is à tygrè yond in Ynde; ¹¹⁹⁹
Ay clappeth as a mille, I yow consaille;

Ne dreed hem nat, doth hem no reverence,
For though thyn housbonde armed be in
maille,

The arwès of thy crabbéd eloquence
Shal perce his brest, and eek his aventaille.
In jalousie I rede eek thou hym bynde,
And thou shalt make hym couche as
dooth a quaille.

If thou be fair, ther folk been in presence
Shewe thou thy visage and thyn apparaille;
If thou be foul, be fre of thy dispence, ¹²⁰⁹
To gete these freendès ay do thy travaille;
Be ay of chiere, as light as leef on lynde,
And lat hym care and wepe, and wryng
and waille!

The Prologe of the Marchantes Tale

‘Wepying and waylyng, care and oother
sorwe

I knowe ynogh, on even and a-morwe,’
Quod the Marchant, ‘and so doon othere mo
That wedded been, I trowe that it be so;
For wel I woot it fareth so with me.
I have a wyf, the worstè that may be,
For thogh thefeend to hire y-coupled were,
She wolde hym overmacche, I dar wel
swere. ¹²²⁰

What sholde I yow reherce in special
Hir hye malice? She is a shrewe at al.
Ther is a long and largè difference
Bitwix Grisildis gretè pacience,
And of my wyf the passyng crueltee.
Were I unbounden, al so moot I thee!

I woldè never eft comen in the snare.
We wedded men lyven in sorwe and care.
Assayè who so wole and he shal fynde ¹²²⁹
I seyè sooth, by Seint Thomas of Ynde!
As for the moorè part, I sey nat alle;
God shildè that it sholdè so bifalle!

‘A! good sire Hoost! I have y-
wedded bee

Thise monthès two, and moorè nat, *pardee!*
And yet, I trowè, he that al his lyve
Wyflees hath been, though that men wolde
him ryve

Unto the herte, ne koude in no manere
Tellen so muchel sorwe as I now heere
Koude tellen of my wyvès cursednesse!’

‘Now,’ quod our Hoost, ‘Marchant,
so God yow blesse!’ ¹²⁴⁰

Syn ye so muchel knowen of that art,
Ful hertely I pray yow telle us part.’

‘Gladly,’ quod he, ‘but of myn owenè
socre,

For soory herte, I tellè may namoore.’

MERCHANT'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Marchantes Tale

Whilom ther was dwellynge in Lum-
bardye

A worthy knyght that born was of Pavye,
In which he lyved in greet prosperitee;
And sixty yeer a wyflees man was hee,
And folwed ay his bodily delyt

On wommen ther as was his appetyt, ¹²⁵⁰
As doon thise foolès that been seculeer;
And whan that he was passèd sixty yeer,
Were it for hoolynesse or for dotage

I kan nat seye, but swich a greet corage
Haddè this knyght to been a wedded man
That day and nyght he dooth al that he
kan

Tespicien where he myghtè wedded be;
Prynginge oure Lord to granten him that he

The Marchantes Tale. The Pear-tree incident
in this story is the subject of the ninth novel of
the seventh day in Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, and
is found also in a collection of Latin fables by one
Adolphus, written in 1315, and elsewhere. It has
probably an Eastern origin.
^{1248.} sixty, H² *fourty*; so H in 1252.

Mighte onés knowe of thilké blisful lyf ¹²⁵⁹
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf,
And for to lyve under that hooly bond
With which that first God man and
womman bond.

'Noon oother lyf,' seylde he, 'is worth a
bene,
For wedlok is so esy, and so clene,
That in this world it is a paradys';
Thus seylde this oldé knyght, that was so
wys.

And certeinly, as sooth as God is kyng,
To take a wyf it is a glorious thyng,
And namely whana man is oold and hoor,—
Thanne is a wyf the fruyt of his tresor,—
Thannesholde he take a yong wyf and a feir,
On which he myghte engendren hym an
heir,

And lede his lyf in joye and in solas;
Where as thise bacheléris synge, 'Allas!'
Whan that they fynden any adversitee
In love, which nys but childyssh vanytee;
And trewely it sit wel to be so
That bacheléris have often peyne and wo;
On brotel ground they buylde, and brotel-
nesse ¹²⁷⁹

They fynde whan they wené sikernesne.
They lyve but as a bryd, or as a beest,
In libertee and under noon arreest,
Ther as a wedded man, in his estaat,
Lyveth a lyf blisful and ordinaat,
Under this yok of mariage y-bounde.
Wel may his herte in joye and blisse ha-
bunde,

For who kan be so buxom as a wyf?
Who is so trewe and eek so ententyf
To kepe hym, syk and hool, as is his make?
For wele or wo she wole hym nat forsake;
She nys nat wery hym to love and serve,
Thogh that he lye bedredé til he sterve.

And yet somme clerkésseyen it nys nat so,
Of whiche he, Theofraste, is oon of tho.
What force thogh Theofrasté listé lye?
'Ne take no wyf,' quod he, 'for hous-
bondrye,

As for to spare in household thy dispence;
A trewé servant dooth moore diligence

^{1273.} *joye, H mirthe.*

^{1294.} *Theofraste.* See Wife of Bath's Tale, ll.
235, 671.

Thy good to kepé, than thyn owené wyf,
For she wol claymé half partal hir lyf; ¹³⁰⁰
And if that thou be syk, so God me save!
Thy verray frendés, or a trewé knave,
Wol kepe thee bet than she, that waiteth ay
After thy good, and hath doon many a day;
And if thou take a wyf unto thyn hool,
Ful lightly maystow been a cokéwold.'
This sentence, and an hundred thyngés
worse,

Writeth this man, ther God his bonés corse!
But take no kepe of al swich vanytee;
Defiéc Theofraste and herké me. ¹³¹⁰

A wyf is Goddés yifté verrailly;
Alle othere manere yiftés hardily,
As londés, rentés, pasture, or commune,
Or mochlés, alle been yiftés of Fortune,
That passen as a shadwe upon a wal;
But dreddeles, if pleynty speke I shal,
A wyf wol laste and in thyn hous endure,
Wel longer than thee list, paraventure.

Marriage is a ful gret sacrament;
He which that hath no wyf I holde hym
shent; ¹³²⁰

He lyveth helples and al desolat,—
I speke of folk in secular estaat;
And herké why, I sey nat this for noght,
That womman is for mannés helpe y-
wrought.

The hyé God whan he hadde Adam maked,
And saugh him al alloné, bely naked,
God of his greté goodness seydé than,
'Lat us now make an helpe unto this man,
Lyk to hymself'; and thanne he made
him Eve. ¹³²⁹

Heere may yese, and heerby may ye preve,
That wyf is mannés helpe and his confort,
His Paradys terrestre, and his disport;
So buxom and so vertuous is she,
They mosté nedés lyve in unitee.
O flessch they been, and o flessch, as I gesse,
Hath but oon herte in wele and in distresse.

A wyf! a! Seinté Marie, *benedicite*,
How myghte a man han any adversitee
That hath a wyf? Certés, I kan nat seye.
The blissé which that is bitwixe hem
tweye ¹³⁴⁰

Ther may no tongé telle or herté thynke,
If he be poure she helpeth hym to swynke,

^{1316.} *dredeles, H⁵ drede not.*

She kepeth his good and wasteth never
a deel ;

Al that hire housbonde lust hire liketh
weel ;

She seith not onès, 'nay,' whan he
seith, 'ye.'

'Do this,' seith he ; 'Al redy, sire,' seith
she.

O blisful ordre of wedlok precious !

Thou art so murye, and eek so vertuous,
And so commended and approvèd eek,
That every man that halt hym worth a
leek,

Upon his barè knees, oughte, al his lyf,
Thanken his God that hym hath sent a
wyf ;

Or ellès preye to God hym for to sende
A wyf, to laste unto his lyvès ende ;
For thanne his lyf is set in sikernesce ;
He may nat be deceyvèd, as I gesse,
So that he werke after his wyvès reede.
Thanne may he boldely kepen up his heed,
They been so trewe, and therwithal so
wyse ;

For which, if thou wolt werken as the
wyse,

Do alway so as wommen wol thee reede.
Lo, how that Jacob, as thise clerkès
rede,

By good conseil of his mooder Rebekke,
Boondè the kydlès skyn aboute his neckke,
Thurgh which his fadrès benysoun he
wan.

Lo Judith, as the storie tellè kan,
By wys conseil she Goddès peple kepte,
And slow hym Olofernus, whil he slepte.

Lo Abigayl, by good conseil how she
Savèd hir housbonde, Nabal, whan that he
Sholde han be slayn ; and looke Ester
also,

By good conseil delyvered out of wo
The peple of God, and made hym Mar-
dochee

Of Assuere enhauncèd for to be.

Ther nys no thyng in gree superlatyf,
As seith Senek, above an humble wyf.

1366. *storie*, F⁴ *storie eek*.

1375. Glossed in E and Heng. : 'Seneca : Sicut nichil est superius (om. F) benigna conjuge, ita nihil crudelius est infesta muliere.'

Suffre thy wyvès tonge, as Catoun bit,
Sheshal comande, and thou shalt suffren it,
And yet she wole obeye of curteisye ;
A wyf is kepere of thyn housbondrye. 1380
Wel may the sikè man biwaille and wepe,
Ther as ther nys no wyf the hous to kepe.
I warnè thee if wisely thou wolt wirche,
Love wel thy wyf, as Crist lovèd his
chirche.

If thou lovest thyself thou lovest thy wyf.
No man hateth his flessch, but in his lyf
He fostreth it, and therefore bidde I thee
Cherisse thy wyf, or thou shalt never
thee.

Housbonde and wyf, what so men jape
or pleye,

Of worldly folk holden the siker weye ; 1390
They been so knyt ther may noon harm
bityde,

And namely upon the wyvès syde ;
For which this Januarie, of whom I tolde,
Considered hath, inwith his dayès olde,
The lusty lyf, the vertuous quyete,
That is in mariagè hony sweete ;
And for his freendès on a day he sente,
To tellen hem theffect of his entente. 1399

With facè sad his tale he hath hem
toold.

He seyde, 'Freendès, I am hoor and oold,
And almoost, God woot, on my pittès
brynke ;

Upon the soulè somewhat moste I thynke.
I have my body folily despended ;
Blessèd be God ! that it shal been
amended,

For I wol be certeyn a wedded man,
And that anoon, in al the haste I kan.
Unto som maydè, fair and tendre of age,
I prey yow shapeth for my mariage
Al sodeynly, for I wol nat abyde ;
And I wol fonde tesprien on my syde 1410
To whom I may be wedded hastily ;
But for as muche as ye been mo than I,
Ye shullen rather swich a thyng espyen
Than I, and where me best were to allyen.

1377. Glossed, 'Cato : Uxoris linguam, si frugi est, ferre memento.'

1387. *bidde*, H *warne*.

1390. *siker*, H *righte*.

1408. *shapeth*, H *helpith*.

But o thyng warne I yow, my freendés
decre,

I wol noon oold wyf han in no manere.
She shal nat passé twenty yeer certayn,
Oold fissh and yongé flessch wolde I
have fayn.

Bet is,' quod he, 'a pyk than a pykerel,
And bet than olde boef is the tendré veel.

I wol no womman thritty yeer of age,—
It is but benéstraw and greet forage ;
And eek thise oldé wydws, God it woot,
They konne so muchel craft on Wadés

boot,
So muchel broken harm, whan that hem
leste,

That with hem sholde I never lyve in
reste ;

colés maken sotile clerkis.

Womman of manye scolés half a clerk is ;
But certeynly a yonge thyng may men gye,
Right as men may warm wex with handés
plyc. 1430

Wherfore I sey yow pleyntly in a clause,
I wol noon oold wyf han right for this
cause ;

For^a if so were that I hadde swich mys-
chaunce

That I in hire ne koude han no plesaunce,
Thanne sholde I lede my lyf in avoutrye,
And go streight to the devel, whan I dye ;
Ne children sholde I none upon hire
geten ;

Yet were me levere houndés had me eten,
Than that myn heritagé sholde falle

In straungé hand, and this I telle yow alle.
I doté nat ; I woot the causé why 1441

Men sholdé wedde, and forthermoore
woot I

Ther speketh many a man of mariage,
That woot namoore of it than woot my
page,

For whiché causés man sholde take a wyf.
Siththé he may nat lyven chaast his lyf,
Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,

1417. *twenty*, H⁴ *sixtene*.

1418. *fayn*, H⁴ *ful fayn*, Pet. *certayn*.

1421. *thritty*, H³ *twenty*.

1424. *on Wades boot*. The legend of Wade and his adventures in his boat Guingelot has perished.

1446. H⁴ *If he ne* (om. Corp.²) *may not chaste be by his life*.

By cause of leveful procreacioun
Of children, to thonour of God above,
And nat oonly for paramour or love ; 1450
And for they sholdé leccherye eschue,
And yelde hir dettès whan that they
ben due ;

Or for that ech of hem sholde helpen
oother

In meschief, as a suster shal the brother,
And lyve in chastitee ful holily ;

But, sirés, by youre leve, that am nat I,
For, God be thanked, I dar make avaunt,
I feele my lymés stark and suffisaunt

To do al that a man bilongeth to ; 1459
I woot my-selven best what I may do.

Though I be hoor, I fare as dooth a tree
That blosmeth, er that fruyt v-woxen bee ;
And blosmy tree nys n

I feele me nowhere hoor but on myn heed ;
Myn herte and alle my lymés been as
grene

As laurer thurgh the yeer is for to sene ;
And syn that ye han herd al myn entente,
I prey yow to my wyl ye wole assente.'

Diversé men diversely hym tolde
Of mariagé manye ensamples olde. 1470
Somme blaméd it, somme preyséd it
certeyn,

But atté lasté, shortly for to seyn,

As al day falleth altercacioun

Bitwixen freendés in disputisoun,

Ther fil a stryf bitwixe his bretheren two,

Of whiche that oon was clepéd Placebo,

Justinus soothly calléd was that oother.

Placebo seyde, 'O Januarie brother,

Ful litel nede hadde ye, my lord so deere,

Conseil to axe of any that is heere, 1480

But that ye been so ful of sapience

That yow ne liketh, for youre heighe
prudence,

To weyven fro the word of Salomon.

This word seyde he unto us everychon,

'Wirk allé thyng by conseil,' thus seyde he,

'And thanné shaltow nat repenté thee' ;

But though that Salomon spak swich
a word,

Myn owen déeré brother, and my lord,

So wysly God my soulé brynge at reste,

1455. *holily*, H⁴ *hevenly*.

1477. *called*, H⁵ *cleped*.

I holde youre owene conseil is the beste ;
 For, brother myn, of me taak this motyf,
 I have now been a court-man al my lyf,
 And, God it woot, though I unworthy be,
 I have stonden in ful greet degree
 Abouten lordés of ful heigh estaat ;
 Yet hadde I never with noon of hem
 debaat ;

I never hem contraried trewely.
 I woot wel that my lord kan moore
 than I ;

What that he seith I holde it ferme and
 stable ; 1499

I seye the same, or ellés thyng semblable.
 A ful greet fool is any conseilour,
 That serveth any lord of heigh honour,
 That dar presume, or ellés thenken it,
 That his conseil sholdepasse his lordés wit.
 Nay, lordés been no foolés, by my fay !
 Ye han youreselfen shewed heer to-day
 So heigh sentence, so holily and weel,
 That I consente and conferme everydeel
 Your wordes alle, and youre opinioun.
 By God, ther nys no man in al this toun,
 Ne in Ytaille, koudé bet han sayd. 1511
 Crist halt hym of this conseil wel apayd ;
 And trewely it is an heigh corage,
 Of any man that stapen is in age,
 To take a yong wyf ; by my fader kyn,
 Your berté hangeth on a joly pyn !
 Dooth now in this matiere right as yowleste,
 For, finally, I holde it for the beste.

Justinus, that ay stillé sat and herde,
 Right in this wise to Placebo answerde : 1520
 'Now, brother myn, be pacient I preye,
 Synyehan seyde, and herkneth what I seye.

'Senek among his othere wordés wyse
 Seith that a man oghte hym right wel avyse
 To whom he yeveth his lond or his catel ;
 And syn I oghte avysé me right wel
 To whom I yeve my good away fro me,
 Wel muchel moore I oghte avyséd be
 To whom I yeve my body for alwey.
 I warne yow wel, it is no childés play 1530
 To take a wyf withoute avysément.

Mun moste enqueré, this is myn assent,
 Wher she be wys, or sobre, or dronkélewe,
 Or proud, or ellés ootherweys a shrewe,

1495. *heigh*, H³ *gret*.
 1503. *ellés*, H⁴ *ones*.

A chidestere, or a wastour of thy good,
 Or riche, or poore, or ellés mannyssh wood.
 Al be it so that no man fynden shal
 Noon in this world that trotteth hool in al,
 Ne man ne beest, which as men koude
 devyse,

But nathéless it oghte ynough suffise 1540
 With any wyf, if so were that she hadde
 Mo goodé thewés than hire vices badde ;
 And al this axeth leyser for tenquere,—
 For, God it woot, I have wept many a teere
 Ful pryvély, syn I have had a wyf.
 Preyse who-so wole a wedded mannés lyf,
 Certein I fynde in it but cost and care,
 And observance of allé blisses bare ;
 And yet, God woot, my neighébore aboute,
 And namely of wommen many a route, 1550
 Scyn that I have the moosté stedefast wyf,
 And eek the mekesté oon that bereth lyf ;
 But I woot best where wryngeth me my sho.
 Ye mowe, for me, right as yow liketh do.
 Avyseth yow, ye been a man of age,
 How that ye entren into mariage,
 And namely with a yong wyf and a fair.
 By hym that madé water, erthe, and air,
 The yongeste man that is in al this route
 Is bisy ynough to bryngen it aboute 1560
 To han his wyf alloné ; trusteth me,
 Ye shul nat plesen hire fully yerés thre,—
 This is to seyn, to doon hire ful plesaunce.
 A wyf axeth ful many an observance.
 I prey yow that ye be nat yvclé apayd.

'Wel,' quod this Januare, 'and hastow
 sayd ?

Straw for thy Senek, and for thy provérbes !
 I counté nat a panyer ful of herbes
 Of scolé termés ; wyser men than thou,
 As thou hast herd, assenteden right now
 To my purpos. Placebo, what sey ye ?'
 'I seye it is a curséd man,' quod he,
 'That letteth matrimoigné sikerly !'
 And with that word they rysen sodeynly,
 And been assented fully that he sholde
 Be wedded whanne hym list and where
 he wolde.

I heigh fantasye and curious bisynesse
 Fro day to day gan in the soule impresse
 Of Januare, aboute his mariáge. 1579
 Many fair shape and many a fair visage

1548. *observance*, E⁶ *observances*.

Ther passeth thurgh his herté nyght by
nyght,

As whoso tooke a mirour polissed bryght
And sette it in a commune market-place,
Thanne sholde he se ful many a figure pace
By his mirour ; and in the samé wyse
Gan Januarie inwith his thoght devyse
Of maydens whiche that dwellen hym
bisyde.

He wisté nat wher that he myghte abyde,
For, if that oon have beaute in hir face,
Another stant so in the pepes grace 1590
For hire sadnesse and hire benygnytee,
That of the peple grettest voys hath she ;
And somme were riche, and hadden
baddé name ;

But nathéles, bitwixe earnest and game,
He atté laste apoynted hym on oon,
And leet alle othere from his herté goon,
And chees hire of his owene auctoritee ;
For love is bynd al day, and may nat see.
And whan that he was in his bed y-broght
He purtreied in his herte and in his thoght
Hir fresshé beautee, and hir agētendre, 1601
Hir myddel smal, hire armés longe and
sklendre,

Hir wigē governaunce, hir gentillesse,
Hir wommanly berynge, and hire sadnesse.
And whan that he on hire was condescended
Hym thoughte his choys myghté nat
ben amended ;

For whan that he hym self concluded hadde,
Hym thoughte ech oother mannés wit so
badde

That impossible it weré to repplye 1609
Agayn his choys,—this was his fantasye.
His freendés sente he to, at his instaunce,
And preyed hem to doon hym that ples-
aunce,

That hastily they wolden to hym come ;
He wolde abregge hir labour, alle and some ;
Nedeth namoore for hym to go ne ryde,
He was apoynted ther he wolde abyde.

Placebo cam, and eek his freendés
soone,

And alderfirst he bad hem alle a boone,
That noon of hem none argumentés make
Agayn the purpos which that he hath take,
Which purpos was pleasant to God, seyde he,
And verray ground of his prosperitee.

Heseyde ther was a mayden in the toun,
Which that of beautee haddé greet renoun,
Al were it so she were of smal degree,
Suffiseth hym hir yowthe, and hir beautee ;
Which mayde, he seyde, he wolde han
to his wyf,

To lede in ese and hoolynesse his lyf ;
And thanked God that he myghte han
hire al, 1629

Thát no wight his blissé parten shal ;
And preyed hem to laboure in this nede
And shapen that he faillé nat to spede ;
For thanne he seyde his spirit was at ese.
'Thanne is,' quod he, 'no-thing may me
displese,

Save o thyng priketh in my conscience,
The which I wol reherce in youre presence.

'I have,' quod he, 'herd seyde, ful
yoore ago,

Ther may no man han parfite blissés two,—
This is to seye, in erthe and eek in hevene,—
For though he kepe hym fro the synnés
sevene, 1640

And eek from every branche of thilké tree,
Yet is ther so parfite felicitée

And so greet ese and lust in mariáge,
That ever I am agast now in myn age,
That I shal ledé now so myrie a lyf,
So delicat, withouten wo and stryf,
That I shal have myn hevene in erthé heere ;
For sith that verray hevene is boght so
deere,

With tribulacioun and greet penaunce,
How sholde I thanne, that lyve in swich
plesaunce 1650

As allé wedded men doon with hire wyvys,
Come to the blisse ther Crist eterne on
lyve ys ?

This is my drede, and ye my bretheren
tweye,

Assoilleth me this questioun, I preye.'

Justinus, which that hated his folye,
Answerde anon right in his japerie ;
And for he wolde his longé tale abregge,
He woldé noon auctoritee allegge,
But seyde, 'Sire, so ther be noon obstácle
Oother than this, God of his hygh myracle,
And of his mercy, may so for yow wirche
That crye have youre right of hooly chirche,
Ye may repente of wedded mannés lyf,

In which ye seyn ther is no wo ne
stryf;

And ellës, God forbedë, but he sente
A wedded man hym gracë to repente
Wel oftë rather than a sengle man;
And therfore, sire,—the bestë reed I
kan,—

Dispeire yow nocht, but have in youre
memoric, 1669

Paraunter she may be youre purgatorie;
She may be Goddës meene, and Goddës
whippe!

Thanne shal youre soulë up to hevenc
skippe

Swifter than doothan arwe out of the bowe.
I hope to God herafter shul ye knowe
That ther nys no so greet felicitee
In mariage, ne never mo shal bee,
That yow shal lette of youre savacioun,
So that ye use, as skile is and resoun,
The lustës of youre wyf attemprely, 1679
And that ye plese hire nat to amorously,
And that ye kepe yow eek from oother
synne.

My tale is doon, for my witte is thynne;
Beth nat agast her-of, my brother deere,
But lat us waden out of this mateere.
(The Wyf of Bathë, if ye han understonde,
Of mariagé, which ye have on honde,
Declarëd hath ful wel in litel space.)
Fareth now wel, God have yow in his
grace.

And with this word this Justyn and his
brother

Han take hir leve, and ech of hem of
oother; 1690

For whan they saughe that it moste
needis be,

They wroghten so, by sly and wys trettee,
That she, this mayden, which that Mayus
highte,

As hastily as ever that she myghte,
Shal wedded be unto this Januarie.

I trowe it were to longë yow to tarie,
If I yow tolde of every scrit and bond
By which that she was feffed in his lond,
Or for to herkennen of hir riche array.

But finally y-comen is the day 1700
That to the churchë bothë be they went,
For to receyve the hooly sacrament.

Forth comth the preest, with stole aboute
his nekke,

And bad hire be lyk Sarra and Rebekke
In wysdom and in trouthe of mariáge,
And seyde his orisons as is uságe,
And croucheth hem and bad God sholde
hem blesse,

And made al siker ynogh with hoolynesse.
Thus been they wedded with solemp-
nitee,

And at the feestë sitteth he and she, 1710
With othere worthy folk, up on the deys.
Al ful of joye and blisse is the paleys,
And ful of instrumentz, and of vitaille
The mostë deyntëuous of all Ytaille.

Biforn hem stooð swich instrumentz of
soun

That Orpheus, ne of Thebës Amphiou, 1720
Ne maden never swich a melodye.

At every cours thanne cam loud
mynstralcy

That never trompéd Joab for to heere,
Nor he Theodomas yet half so cleere 1720
At Thebës, whan the citee was in doute.
Bacus the wyn hem skynketh al aboute,
And Venus laugheth upon every wight,
For Januarie was bicomë hir knyght,
And woldë bothe assayen his coráge
In libertee, and eek in mariáge;
And with hire fyrbrond in hire hand aboute
Daunceth biforn the bryde and al the
route;

And certainly I dar right wel seyn this
Yméneus, that god of wedding is, 1730
Saughe never his lyf so myrie a wedded
man.

Hoold thou thypees, thou poete Marcian,—
That writest us that ilkë wedding murie
Of hire Philologie and hym Mercurie,
And of the songës that the Muses songe,—
To smal is bothe thy penne and eek thy
tonge,

For to descryven of this mariáge,

^{1722.} Cp. *Hous of Fame*, l. 1245, on which Professor Skeat points out that Chaucer takes his mention of Theodamas from Statius, *Thebaid*, viii. 343.

^{1732.} *Marcian*, Martianus Capella, a writer of the 5th century, whose *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* was a treatise on the liberal arts in nine books.

Whan tendré youthe hath wedded stoup-
yng age ;

Ther is swich myrthe that it may nat be
writen. 1739

Assayeth it youre self, thanne mayye witen
If that I lye or noon in this matiere.

Mayus, that sit with so benyngne a chiere,
Hire to biholde it semed fairyc.

Queene Ester looked never with swich
an eye

On Assuer, so meke a look hath she.

I may yow nat devyse al hir beautee,
But thus muche of hire beautee telle I may,
That she was lyk the brighte morwe of May
Fulfil of all beautee and plesaunce. 1749

This Januarie is ravysshed in a traunce
At every tyme he looked on hir face ;
But in his herte he gan hire to manace,
That he that nyght in armés wolde hire
streyne

Harder than ever Parys dide Eleyne ;
But nathelees yet hadde he greet pitee
That thilké nyght offenden hire moste he ;
And thoughte, ' Allas ! O tendré créature !
Now woldé God ye myghté wel endure
Al my corage, it is so sharpe and keene !
I am agast ye shul it nat susteene ; 1760
But God forbede that I dide al my myght,
Now woldé God that it were woxen nyght,
And that the nyght wolde lasten evermo.
I wolde that al this peple were ago ! '

And finally he dooth al his labóur,
As he best myghté, savyngé his honóur,
To haste hem fro the mete in subtil wyse.

The tymé cam that resoun was to ryse,
And after that men daunce and drynken
faste, 1769

And spices al aboute the hous they caste,
And ful of joye and blisse is every man,—
All but a squyer highté Damyan,
Which carf biforn the knyght ful many a
day.

He was so ravysshed on his lady May
That for the verray payne he was ny wood.
Almoost he swelte and swowned ther he
stood,

So soore hath Venus hurt hym with hire
brond

As that she bar it daunsynge in hire hond ;
And to his bed he wente hym hastily.

Namoore of hym as at this tyme speke I,
But there I lete hym wepe ynogh and
pleyne 1781

Til fresshé May wol rewen on his payne.

O perilous fyr that in the bedstraw
bredeth !

O famulier foo, that his servyce bedeth !
O servant traytour, falsé, hoonly hewe,
Lyk to the naddre in bosom, sly, untrewé,
God shilde us allé from youre áqueyntance !
O Januarie, dronken in plesance

In mariáge, se how thy Damyan, 1789

Thyn owenét squier and thy borné man,
Entendeth for to do thee vileynyc !

God graunté thee thyn hoonly fo tespye,
For in this world nys worsé pestilence
Than hoonly foo al day in thy presence !

Parfournéd hath the sonne his ark
diurne,

No lenger may the body of hym sojourne
On thorisonte, as in that latitude.

Night with his mantel, that is derk and rude,
Gan oversprede the hemysperie aboute,
For which departed is this lusty route 1800
Fro Januarie, with thank on every syde.
Hoom to hir houses lustily they ryde,
Where-as they doon hir thyngés as hem
leste,

And, whan theysye hir tymé, goon to reste.

Soone after that, this hastif Januarie
Wolde go to bedde, he wolde no lenger
tarye.

He drynketh ypcoras, clarree and vernáge,
Of spices hoote, tencressen his coráge ;
And many a letuarie hath he ful fyn

Swiche as the curséd monk, Daun
Constantyn, 1810

Hath writen in his book, *De Coitu* ;

To eten hem alle he nas no thyng eschu :

And to his privee freendés thus seyde he :

' For Goddés love, as soone as it may be,

Lat voyden al this hous in curteys wyse ' ;

And they han doon right as he wol devyse.

Men drynken and the travers drawe anon ;

The bryde was broght a-bedde as stille

as stoon,

And whan the bed was with the preest

y-blessed,

1810. Daun Constantyn, a monk of Monte

Cassino. Cp. Gen. Prologue, 433.

Out of the chambre hath every wight hym
dressed ; 1820

And Januarie hath faste in armès take
His fresshè May, his paradys, his make.
He lulleth hire, he kisseth hire ful ofte,
With thikke brustles of his berd unsofte,
Lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh, sharpe as
brere ;

For he was shave al newe in his manere.
He rubbeth hire aboute hir tendre face
And seydè thus, 'Allas ! I moot trespass
To yow, my spouse, and yow greetly
offende, 1829

Er tymè come that I wil doun descende ;
But nathelees, considereth this,' quod he,
'Ther nys no werkman, whatsover he be,
That may bothe werk wel and hastily.
This wol be doon at leyser parfitly,
It is no fors how longè that we pleye ;
In trewè wedlok coupled be we tweye,
And blessèd be the yok that we been inne !
For in oure actès we mowe do no synne.
A man may do no synnè with his wyf,
Ne hurte hymselfen with his owene knyf ;
For we han leve to pleye us, by the lawe.'
Thus laboureth he til the day gan dawne,
And thanne he taketh a sope in fyne clarre,
And upright in his bed thanne sitteth he ;
And after that he sang ful loude and cleere,
And kiste his wyf, and madè wantowne
cheere.

He was al coltish, ful of ragerye,
And ful of jargon as a flekkèd pye.
The slakkè skyn aboute his nekkè shaketh
While that he sang, so chaunteth he and
craketh ; 1850

But God woot what that May thoughte
in hire herte

Whan she hym saugh up-sittyng in his
sherte,

In his nyght-cappe, and with his nekkè
lene !

She preyeth nat his pleying worth a bene.

Thanne seide he thus, 'My restè wol
I take ;

Now day is come, I may no lenger wake ;
And doun he leyde his heed and sleepe til
pryme.

And afterward, whan that he saugh his
tyme,

Up ryseth Januarie, but fresshè May 1859
Heeld hire chambre unto the fourthè day,
As usage is of wyvès, for the beste ;
For every labour som tyme moot han reste,
Or ellès longè may he nat endure ;
This is to seyn, no lyvès creature,
Be it of fyssh, or bryd, or beest, or man.

Now wol I speke of woful Damyan,
That langwischeth for love, as yeshulheere ;
Therefore I speke to hym in this manere.

I seye, O sely Damyan, allas ! 1869
Andswere to my demaunde as in this cas.
How shaltow to thy lady, fresshè May,
Tellè thy wo ? She wole alwey seye nay.
Eek if thou speke, she wol thy wo biwreye.
God be thyn helpe, I kan no bettrè seye.

This sikè Damyan in Venus fyr
So brenneth, that he dyeth for desyr ;
For which he putte his lyf in aventure.
No lenger myghte he in this wise endure,
But prively a penner gan he borwe, 1879
And in a lettrè wroot he al his sorwe,—
In manere of a compleynte or a lay,—
Unto his fairè, fresshè lady May ;
And in a purs of sylk, heng on his sherte,
He hath it put and leyde it at his herte.

The moonè, that at noon was thilkè day
That Januarie hath wedded fresshè May
In two of Tawr, was into Cancre glyden,
So longe hath Mayus in hir chambre byden,
As custome is unto thise nobles alle.

A brydè shal nat eten in the halle 1890
Til dayès foure, or thre dayes attè leeste,
Y-passèd been ; thanne lat hire go to feeste.
The fourthè day compleet fro noon to noon,
Whan that the heighè massè was y-doon,
In hallè sit this Januarie and May,
As fressh as is the brightè someres day ;
And so bifel, how that this goodè man
Remembred hym upon this Damyan,
And seydè, 'Seyntè Marie ! how may
this be

That Damyan entendeth nat to me ? 1900
Is he ay syk ? or how may this bityde ?'
His squieres, whiche that stooden ther
bisyde,

1887. *In two of Tawr.* The moon could pass
through Taurus and Gemini into Cancer in four
days.

Excused hym by cause of his siknesse,
Which letted hym to doon his bisynesse,—
Noon oother causè myghtè make hym
tarye.

‘That me forthynketh,’ quod this
Januarie,

‘He is a gentil squier, by my trouthe !
If that he deyde, it werè harm and routhe ;
He is as wys, discreet, and eek secree,
As any man I woot, of his degree ; 1910
And therto manly and eek servysable,
And for to been a thrifty man right able ;
But after mete, as soone as ever I may,
I wol myself visite hym, and eek May,
To doon hym al the confort that I kan’ ;
And for that word hym blessed every man,
That of his bountee and his gentillesse
He woldè so conforten in siknesse
His squier, for it was a gentil dede.
‘Dame,’ quod this Januarie, ‘taak good
hede 1920

At after mete ye with youre wommen alle,
Whan ye han been in chambre out of
this halle,

That allè ye go se this Damyan.

Dooth hym disport, he is a gentil man,
And telleth hym that I wol hym visite,
Have I no thyng but rested me a lite ;
And spede yow fastè, for I wole abyde
Til that ye slepè fastè by my syde’ ;
And with that word he gan unto hym calle
A squier, that was marchal of his halle,
And tolde hym certeyn thyngès, what he
wolde. 1931

This fresschè May hath streight hir wey
y-holde,

With alle hir wommen, unto Damyan.
Doun by his beddès syde sit she than,
Confortynge hym as goodly as she may.
This Damyan, whan that his tyme he say,
In secree wise, his purs and eek his bille,
In which that he y-writen hadde his wille,
Hath put into hire hand, withouten moore,
Save that he siketh wonder depe and soore,
And softly to hire right thus seyde he :
‘Mercy ! and that ye nat discovere me,
For I am deed, if that this thyng be kyd.’
This purs hath she inwith hir bosom hyd,
And wente hire wey—ye gete namoore
of me ;

But unto Januarie y-comen is she
That on his beddès syde sit ful softe.
He taketh hire and kisseth hire ful ofte,
And leyde hym down to slepe, and that
anon. 1949

She feynèd hire as that she mostè gon
Ther as ye woot that every wight moot
neede ;

And whan she of this bille hath taken
heede,

She rente it al to cloutès attè laste,
And in the pryvce softly it caste.

Who studieth now, but fairè, fresschè
May ?

Adoun by oldè Januarie she lay,
That sleep til that the coughe hath hym
awaked.

Anon he preyde hire strepen hire al naked,
He wolde of hire, he seyde, han som
plesaunce ;

And seyde hir clothès dide hym encom-
braunce. 1960

And she obeyeth, be hire lief or looth ;
But, lest that precious folk be with me
wrooth,

How that he wroghte I darnat to yow telle,
Or wheither hire thoughte it paradys or
helle ;

But heere I lete hem werken in hir wyse,
Til evensong rong, and than they moste
aryse.

Were it by destynnee or aventure,
Were it by influence or by nature, 1968
Or constellacioun, that in swich estaat
The hevene stood, that tymè fortunaat
Was, for to putte a bille of Venus werkes
(For allè thyng hath tyme, as seyn thise
clerkes)

To any woman for to get hire love,
I kan nat seye ; but gretè God above
That knoweth that noon act is causèlees,
He deme of al, for I wole holde my pees ;
But sooth is this, how that this fresschè May
Hath takè swich impressioun that day,
For pitee of this sikè Damyan, 1979
That from hire hertè she ne dryvè kan
The remembrancè, for to doon hym ese.
‘Certeyn,’ thoughte she, ‘whom that this
thyng displese

1966. *than, E³ that.*

I rekké noght, for heere I hym assure
To love hym best of any créature,
Though he namooré haddé than his sherte.¹
Lo, pitee renneeth soone in gentil herte !

Heere mayye se how excellent franchise
In wommen is, whan they hem narweavise.
Som tyrant is, as ther be many oon, 1989
That hath an herte as hard as any stoon,
Which wolde han lat hym storven in the
place,

Wel rather than han graunted hym hire
grace ;

And hem rejoysen in hire cruell pryde,
And rekké nat to been an homycide.

This gentil May, fulfillèd of pitee,
Right of hire hand a lettré madé she,
In which she graunteth hym hire verray
grace.

Ther lakketh noght, oonly but day and
place

Wher that she myghte unto his lust suffice,
For it shal be right as he wole devyse ; 2000
And whan she saugh bir tyme, upon a day,
To visité this Danyan gooth May,
And sotilly this lettré doun she threste
Under his pilwe, rede it if hym leste !
She taketh hym by the hand and harde
hym twiste,

So secrèly that no wight of it wiste,
And bad hym been al hool ; and forth
she wente

To Januarie, whan that he for hire sente.

Up riseth Danyan the nexté morwe ;
Al passéd was his siknesse and his sorwe.
He kembeth hym, he preyneth hym and
pyketh, 2011

He dooth al that his lady lust and lyketh ;
And eek to Januarie he gooth as lowe
As ever dide a doggè for the bowe.

He is so plesant unto every man,---
For craft is al, whoso that do it kan,---
That every wight is fayne to speke hym good,
And fully in his lady grace he stood.

Thus lete I Danyan aboute his nede,
And in my talé forth I wol procede. 2020

Somme clerkés holden that felicitée
Stant in delit, and therfore cerceyn he,

2014. *for the bowe*, a dog used in shooting.

2018. *lady*, the possessive case.

2021. *Somme clerkés*. Cp. General Prologue,
337, 338.

This noble Januarie with al his myght,
In honeste wyse, as longeth to a knyght,
Shoope hym to lyvé ful deliciously.
His housynge, his array, as honestly
To his degree was makéd as a kynges.
Amongés othere of his honeste thynges
He made a gardyn walléd al with stoon.
So fair a gardyn woot I nowher noon, 2030
For out of doute, I verrailly suppose
That he that wroot the Romance of the Rose
Ne koude of it the beautee wel devyse ;
Ne Priapus ne myghté nat suffice,
Though he be god of gardyns, for to telle
The beautee of the gardyn, and the welle,
That stood under a laurer, alwey grene.
Ful ofté tyme he Pluto, and his queene
Proserpina, and al hire farye,
Disporten hem and maken melodye 2040
Aboute that welle, and dauncéd as men
tolde.

This noble knyght, this Januarie the
olde,

Swich deyntee hath in it to walke and pleye
That he wol no wight suffren bere the keye,
Save he hymself, for of the smale wykét
He baar alwey of silver a clykét,
With which, whan that hym leste, he it
unshette ;

And whan he woldé paye his wyf hir dette
In somer sesoun, thider wolde he go,
And May his wyf, and no wight but
they two, 2050

And thyngés whiche that were nat doon
a bedde

He in the gardyn parfourned hem and
spedde ;

And in this wysé many a murye day
Lyvéd this Januarie and fresshé May ;
But worldly joyé may nat alwey dure
To Januarie, ne to no créature.

O sodeyn hape ! O thou Fortune instable !
Lyk to the scorpion so deceyvable
That flaterest with thyn heed whan thou
wolt styngé ;

Thy tayl is deeth, thurgh thyn envenym-
ynge ! 2060

O brotil joye ! O sweeté venym queynte !
O monstre, that so subtilly kanst peynte
Thy yiftés, under hewe of stidefastnesse,

That thou deceyvest bothé moore and lesse,
Why hastow Januarie thus deceyved,
That haddest hym for thy ful freend
receyved?

And now thou hast biraft hym bothe his
eyen,
For sorwe of which desireth he to dyen.

Allas! this noble Januarie free,
Amydde his lust and his prosperitee, 2070
Is woxen blynd, and that al sodeynly!
He wepeth and he wayleth pitously,
And therewithal the fyr of jalousie—
Lest that his wyf sholde falle in som folye—
So brente his herté, that he woldé fayn
That som man bothé hym and hire had
slayn;

For neither after his deeth nor in his lyf,
Ne wolde he that she weré love ne wyf,
But ever lyve as wydwe in clothés blake,
Soul as the turtle that lost hath hire make.

But atté laste, after a monthe or tweye,
His sorwe gan aswagé, sooth to seye,
For whan he wiste it may noon oother be
He paciently took his adversitee,
Save, out of douté, he may nat forgoon
That he nas jalous evermoore in oon.
Which jalousye it was so outrageous,
That neither in hallé, nyn noon oother hous,
Ne in noon oother placé never-the-mo,
He noldé suffré hire to ryde or go, 2090
But if that he had hond on hire alway;
For which ful ofté wepeth fresshé May,
That loveth Damyan so benyngnely
That she moot outhere dyen sodeynly,
Or ellés she moot han hym as hir leste;
She wayteth whan hir herté woldé breste.

Upon that oother syde Damyan
Bicomen is the sorwefullesté man
That ever was, for neither nyght ne day
Ne myghte he spekea word to fresshé May,
As to his purpos, of no swich matere, 2101
But if that Januarie moste it heere,
That hadde an hand upon hire cvermo;
But nathelees, by writyng to and fro,
And priveesigné, wiste he what she mente,
And she knew eek the fyn of his entente.

O Januarie! what myghte it thee availle

2106. *syn, sum*

Thogh thou myghtest se as fer as shippés
saille?

For al-so good is blynd deceyvéd be 2109
As to be deceyvéd whan a man may se.

Lo Argus, which that hadde an hondred
eyen,

For al that ever he koudé poure or pryen,
Yet was he blent, and, God woot, so
been mo,

That wenen wisly that it be nat so;
'Passe-over is an ese,'—I sey namoore.

This fresshé May, that I spak of so
yoore,

In warm wex hath emprented the clykét
That Januarie bar of the smale wykét,
By which into his gardyn ofte he wente;
And Damyan, that knew al hire entente,
The cliket countréfeted pryvely. 2121
Ther nys namoore to seye; but hastily
Som wonder by this clyket shal bityde,
Which ye shul heeren, if ye wole alyde.

O noble Ovyde! ful sooth seystou,
God woot,

What sleighte is it, thogh it be long and
hoot,

That he nyl fynde it out in som manere.
By Piramus and Tesbee may men leere,
Thogh they were kept ful longe streite
overal,

They been accorded, rownyngé thurgh
a wal, 2130

Ther no wight koude han founde out
swich a sleighte.

But now to purpos,—er that daye eighte
Were passéd er the monthe of Juyn bifille,
That Januarie hath caught so greet a wille,
Thurgh eggyng of his wyf, hym for to pleye
In his gardyn, and no wight but they
tweye,

That in a morwe unto this May seith he,
'Rys up, my wyf, my love, my lady free!
The turtle voys is herd, my dowvé sweete,
The wynter is goon with alle his reynés
weete;

2133. *Juyn, MSS. July*, but see l. 2222; the
mistake may be Chaucer's.

2138. January had been reading the *Song of
Solomon*.

Com forth now with thyne eyen columbyn !
How fairer been thy brestes than is wyn !
The gardyn is enclosed al aboute ;
Com forth, my white spouse ! out of doute
Thou hast me wounded in myn herte, O
wyf !

No spot of thee ne knew I al my lyf ;
Come forth, and lat us taken som disport ;
I chees thee for my wyf and my confort !
Swiche oldé lewéd wordés used he.

On Damyan a signé madé she, ²¹⁵⁰
That he sholde go biforn with his clíkét.
This Damyan thanne hath openéd the
wykét,

And in he stirte, and that in swich manere
That no wight myght it se, neither y-heere ;
And stille he sit under a bussch anon.

This Januarie, as blynd as is a stoon,
With Mayus in his hand and no wight mo,
Into his fressshé gardyn is ago,
And clapté to the wyket sodeynly.

'Now, wyf,' quod he, 'heere nys but
thou and I, ²¹⁶⁰

That art the creature that I best love ;
For, by that Lord that sit in hevене above,
Levere ich hadde to dyen on a knyf,
Than thee offendé, trewé, deeré wyf.
For Goddés saké, think how I thee chees
Noght for no coveitise doutlees,
But oonly for the love I had to thee ;
And though that I be oold and may nat
sec,

Beth to me trewe, and I shal telle yow
why.

Thre thyngés, certés, shal yewynnether by ;
First, love of Crist, and to yourself honour,
And al myn heritagé, toun and tour ;
I yeve it yow ; maketh chartres as yow leste.
This shal be doon tomorwe er sonné reste,
So wisly God my soule brynge in blisse !
I prey yow first in covenant ye me kisse,
And though that I be jealous, wyte me
noght.

Ye been so depe enprented in my thought,
That whan that I considere youre beautee,
And therwithal the unlikly elde of me,
I may nat, certés, though I sholdé dye,
Forbere to been out of youre compaignye ;

^{2144.} *white*, H *swete*.

^{2147.} *son*, H *oure*.

For verray love this is, withouten doute.
Now kys me, wyf, and lat us rome aboute.'

This fressshé May, whan she thise wordés
herde,

Benyngnely to Januarie answerde ;
But first and forward, she bigan to wepe ;
'I have,' quod she, 'a soule for to kepe
As wel as ye, and also myn honour ;
And of my wyfhod thilké tendré flour ²¹⁹⁰
Which that I have assured in youre hond,
Whan that the preest to yow my body
bond ;

Wherefore I wole answer in this manere,
By the leve of yow, my lord so deere ;
I prey to God that never dawe the day
That I ne sterve, as foule as womman may,
If ever I do unto my kyn that shame,
Or ellés I empeyre so my name,
That I be fals ; and if I do that lakke,
Do strepé me, and put me in a sakke, ²²⁰⁰
And in the nexté ryver do me drenche,—
I am a gentil womman and no wenche !
Whyspeke ye thus ? But men been ever
untrewe,

And wommen have reprieve of yow ay
newe.

Ye han noon oother contenance, I leeve,
But speke to us of untrust and repreeve.'
And with that word she saugh wher Damyan
Sat in the bussch, and coughen she bigan,
And with hir fynger signés madé she
That Damyan sholde clymbe upon a tree
That chargéd was with fruyt, and up he
wente ; ²²¹¹

For verrailly he knew al hire entente,
And every signé that she koudé make
Wel bet than Januarie, hir owené make ;
For in a lettré she hadde toold hym al
Of this matérc, how he werchen shal ;
And thus I lete hym sitte upon the pyrie,
And Januarie and May romyngé myrie.

Bright was the day, and blew the firma-
ment ; ²²¹⁹

Phebus of gold doun hath his stremés sent
To gladen every flour with his warmnesse.
He was that tyme in Geminis, as I gesse,
But litel fro his declynacioun

^{2222.} The sun would pass from Gemini into
Cancer about June 11 or 12, attaining at that time
its greatest northern declination.

Of Cancer, Jovis exaltacioun ;
 And so bifel, that brighte morwe tyde,
 That in that gardyn, in the ferther syde,
 Pluto, that is the kyng of fairye,
 And many a lady in his compaignye,
 Folwyng his wyf, the queené Proserpyne,
 Ech after oother, right as ony lyne,— 2230
 Whil that she gadered flourés in the mede,
 In Claudyan ye may the stories rede,
 How in his grisely carté he hire fette.
 This kyng of fairye thanne adoun hym sette

Upon a bench of turvés, fressh and grene,
 And right anon thus seyde he to his queene :
 ‘ My wyf,’ quod he, ‘ ther may no wight
 seye nay,

Thexperience so preveth every day
 The tresons whiche that women doon
 to man. 2239

Ten hondred thousand [tales] tellen I kan
 Notable of youre untrouthe and brótil-
 nesse.

O Salomon ! wys, and richest of richesse,
 Fulfild of sapience and of worldly glorie,
 Ful worthy been thy wordés to mémorie
 To every wight that wit and reson kan !
 Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man :
 ‘ Amonges a thousand men yet foond I oon,
 Bút of women allé foond I noon.’

‘ Thus seith the kyng that knoweth youre
 wikkednesse,

And Jhesus *filius* Syrak, as I gesse, 2250
 Ne speketh of yow but seeldé reverence.
 A wyldé fyr and corrupt pestilence,
 So falle upon youre bodyes yet to-nyght !
 Ne se ye nat this honorable knyght ?
 By-cause, allas ! that he is blynd and old
 His owené man shal make hym cokéwold.
 Lo, heere he sit, the lechour, in the tree !
 Now wol I graunten of my magestee
 Unto this oldé, blyndé, worthy knyght,
 That he shal have ageyn his eyen syght,
 Whan that his wyf wold doon hym vileynye.
 Thanne shal he knowen al hire harlotrye
 Bothe in repreve of hire and othere mo.’

‘ Ye shal ?’ quod Proserpyne ; ‘ and
 wol ye so ?

2232. In *Claudyan*, i.e. in the *De Raptu Proserpinae*.

2247. See *Ecclesiastes* vii. 29.

Now by my moodres sirés soule ! I swere
 That I shal yeven hire suffisant answeré,
 And allé wommen after, for hir sake,
 That though they be in any gilt y-take,
 With facé boold they shulle hemself excuse,
 And bere hem doun that wolden hem
 accuse ; 2270
 For lakke of answeré noon of hem shal
 dyen.

Al hadde man seyn a thyng with bothe
 his eyen,

Yit shul we wommen visage it hardily,
 And wepe, and swere, and chidé subtilly.
 So that ye men shul been as lewed as
 gees.

What rekketh me of youre auctoritees ?

‘ I woot wel that this Jew, this Salomon,
 Foond of us wommen foolés many oon,
 But though that he ne foond no good
 womman, 2279

Yet hath ther foundé many another man
 Wommenful trewe, ful goodleand vertuus ;
 Witnessse on hem that dwelle in Cristés
 hous ;

With martirdom they prevéd hire con-
 stance.

The Romayn Geestés eek make remem-
 brance

Of many a verray trewé wyf also ;
 But, sire, ne be nat wrooth,—al be it so,
 Though that he seyde he foond no good
 womman,

I prey yow take the sentence of the man,
 He menté thus, that in sovereyn bontee
 Nis noon but God that sit in Trinitee. 2290
 Ey, for verray God, that nys but oon,
 What maké ye so muche of Salomon ?
 What though he made a temple, Goddés
 hous ?

What though he weré riche and glorious ?
 So made he eek a temple of false goddis.
 How myghte he do a thyng that moore
 forbode is ?

Pardee ! as faire as ye his name emplastre
 He was a lechour and an ydolastre,
 And in his elde he verray God forsook ;
 And if that God ne hadde, as seith the
 book, 2300

2265. *moodres sires soule*, i.e. Saturn's, but
sires is probably a blunder for *Ceres*.

Y-sparèd for his fadres sake, he sholde
Have lost his regnè rather than he wolde.
I sette right noght, of al the vileynye
That ye of wommen write, a boterflye !
I am a womman, nedès moot I speke,
Or ellès swelle til myn hertè breke ;
For sithen he seyde that we been jangler-
esses,

As ever hool I mootè brouke my tresses !
I shal nat sparè for no curteiseye
To speke hym harm that wolde us vil-
eynye !' 2310

'Dame,' quod this Pluto, 'be no lenger
wrooth,
I yeve it up ! but sith I swoor myn ooth
That I wolde graunten hym his sighte
ageyn,

My word shal stonde, I warnè yow certeyn.
I am a kyng, it sit me noght to lye !'

'And I,' quod she, 'a queene of faery !
Hir answer shal she have, I undertake.
Lat us namoorè wordès heer-of make,
For sothe I wol no lenger yow contrarie.'

Now lat us turne agayn to Januarie, 2320
That in the gardyn with his fairè May
Syngeth ful murier than the papèjay :
'Yow love I best, and shal, and oother
noon.'

So longe aboute the aleyes is he goon,
Til he was come agayns thilkè pyrie
Where as this Damyan sitteth ful myrie,
Anheigh among the fresshé levès grene.

This fresshé May, that is so bright and
sheene,

Gan for to syke and seyde, 'Allas, my
syde !

Now, sire,' quod she, 'for aught that may
bityde, 2330

I moste han of the perès that I see,
Or I moot dye, so soorè longeth me
To eten of the smalè perès grene.
Help, for hir love that is of havenèqueene !
I telle yow wel, a womman in my plit
May han to fruyt so greet an appetit
That she may dyen, but she of it have.'

'Allas !' quod he, 'that I ne had heer
a knave

That koudèclymbe ! Allas, alas !' quod he,
'That I am bynd !' 'Ye, sire, no fors,'
quod she ; 2340

'But wolde ye vouchè-sauf, for Goddès
sake,

The pyrieinwith youre armès for to take,—
For wel I woot that ye mystrustè me,—
Thanne sholde I clymbè wel ynogh,'
quod she,

'So I my foot myghte sette upon youre
bak.'

'Certès,' quod he, 'theron shal be no
lak,

Mighte I yow helpen with myn hertè
blood !'

Hestoupeth donn, and on his bak she stood,
And caughte hire by a twiste, and up she
gooth,—

Ladies, I prey yow that ye be nat wrooth,
I kan nat glose, I am a rudè man,— 2351

And sodeynly anon this Damyan
Gan pullen up the smok, and in he throng.

And whan that Pluto saugh this gretè
wrong,

To Januarie he yaf agayn his sighte,
And madè hymseas wel as ever he myghte ;
And whan that he hadde caught his sighte
agayn,

Ne was ther never man of thyng so fayn ;
But on his wyf his thought was evermo.

Up to the tree he caste his eyen two, 2360
And saugh that Damyan his wyf had dressed
In swich manere it may nat been expressed,

But if I woldè speke uncurteisly ;
And up he yaf a roryng and a cry,
As dooth the mooder whan the child shal
dye.

'Out ! helpe ! allas ! harrow !' he gan to
crye ;

'O strongè lady, stoorè, what dostow ?'
And she answerdè, 'Sire, what eyleth
yow ?

Have pacience and resoun in youre mynde.
I have yow holpe on bothe youre eyen
blynde,— 2370

Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lyen,—
As me was taught to heelè with youre
eyen,

Was no thyng bet to makè yow to see
Than strugle with a man upon a tree.

God woot, I dide it in ful good entente.'

'Strugle,' quod he, 'ye, algate in it
wente !

God yeve yow bothe on shamés deth to
dyen !

Ile swyvéð thee ; I saugh it with myne
eyen ;

And ellés be I hangéd by the hals !'

'Thanne is,' quod she, 'my medicyné
fals,

2380

For certeinly, if that ye myghté se,
Ye wolde nat seyn this wordés unto me ;
Yehansom glymsyng, and no parfitsighte.'

'I se,' quod he, 'as wel as ever I myghte,
Thonkéd be God ! with bothe myne eyen
two,

And, by my trouthe, me thoughte he
dide thee so.'

'Ye mazé, mazé, goodé sire,' quod she ;
'This thank have I for I have maad yow
see.

Allas !' quod she, 'that ever I was so
kynde.'

'Now, dame,' quod he, 'lat al passe
out of mynde.

2390

Com doun, my lief, and if I have myssayd,
God helpe me so, as I am yvele apayd.
But, by my fader soule ! I wende han seyn
How that this Damyan hadde by thee
leyn,

And that thy smok hadde leyn upon his
brest.'

'Ye, sire,' quod she, 'ye may wene as
yow lest,

But, sire, a man that waketh out of his
sleepe,

Ile may nat sodeynly wel taken keepe

Upon a thyng, ne seen it parfitly,

Til that he be adawéð verrailly.

2400

Right so a man that longe hath blynd y-be,
Ne may nat sodeynly so wel y-se,

First whan his sighte is newé come ageyn,
As he that hath a day or two y-seyn.

Til that youre sighte y-satled be a while,
Ther may ful many a sighté yow bigile.

Beth war, I prey yow, for, by hevené kyng,

2405. *y-satled*, H⁵ *y-stablid*.

Ful many a man weneth to seen a thyng,
And it is al another than it semeth.

Hethatmysconceyveth, hemysdemeth,'—
And with that word she leepe doun fro
the tree.

2411

This Januarie, who is glad but he ?

Ile kisseth hire and clippeth hire ful ofte,
And on hire wombe he stroketh hire ful
softe ;

And to his palays hoom he hath hire lad.

Now, goodé men, I pray yow to be glad.

Thus endeth heere my tale of Januarie.

God blesse us, and his mooder Seinté
Marie !

'Ey, Goddés mercy,' seyle oure Hosté
tho,

'Now swich a wyf, I pray God kepe me
fro !

2420

Lo, whiché sleightés and subtilitees

In wommen been ! for ay as bisy as bees

Been they, us sely men for to deceyve ;

And from a sooth ever wol they weyve.

By this Marchauntés tale it preveth weel ;

But doutélees, as trewe as any steel

I have a wyf, though that she pouré be ;

But of hir tonge a labbyng shrewe is she ;

And yet she hath an heepe of vicés mo,

Therof no fors, lat alle swiche thyngés
go ;

But wyte ye what ? In conseil be it seyð,

Me reweth soore I am unto hire teyð ;

For, and I sholdé rekenen every vice

Which that she hath, y-wis I were to nyce ;

And causé why, it sholde reported be,

And toold to hire of somme of this meynce,

Of whom it nedeth nat for to declare
(Syn wommen konnen outen swich chaf-
fare),

And eek my wit suffiseth nat therto, 2439
'To tellen al, wherfore my tale is do.'

2419. E heads this *The Prologe of the SQUIRES
Tale*, printing with it the first eight lines of Group
F. Camb., Corp. and Lansd. omit.

TALES OF THE FOURTH DAY

GROUP F

Words of the Host to the Squire

'SQUIER, come neer, if it youre willê be,
And sey somwhat of love ; for certês ye
Konnen theron as muche as any man.'

'Nay, sire,' quod he, 'but I wol seye
as I kan

With hertly wyl,—for I wol nat rebelle
Agayn youre lust. A talê wol I telle.
Have me excusêd, if I speke amys,
My wyl is good, and lo, my tale is this.'

SQUIRE'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Squieres Tale

At Sarray, in the land of Tartarye,
Ther dwelte a kyng that werreyed Russye,
Thurgh which ther dyde many a doughty
man. ¹¹

This noble kyng was clepêd Cambyuskan,
Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun
That ther was nowher in no regioun
So excellent a lord in allê thyng.
Hym lakked noght that longeth to a kyng ;
As of the secte of which that he was born,
He kepte his lay, to which that he was
sworn ;

And therto he was hardy, wys, and riche,
Pitous and just, and evermore yliche ; ²⁰
Sooth of his word, benigne and honourable,

1. *Squier*, H *Sir Squier*; Heng., Pet. *Sir Frankelcyn*. Camb., Corp. and Lansd. omit these lines.

2. *sey somewhat of love*, H *say us a tale*.

Squire's Tale. Keightley in his *Tales and Popular Fictions* (1834) suggested that the local colour of this Tale was derived from Marco Polo, and Col. Yule notes that Cambyuskan is only a corruption of Chinghiz (or 'the great') Khan. Dr. Skeat has quoted passages from Marco Polo's description of Kublai Khan as the sources of some of Chaucer's lines, but the resemblances are not at all close. On magic horses, rings and mirrors Mr. Clouston has written a whole book for the Chaucer Society.

16. *longeth*, H⁵ *longed*.

Of his corâge as any centre stable ;
Yong, fressh, and strong, in armês desirous
As any bachelor of al his hous.

A fair persone he was, and fortunat,
And kepte alwey so wel roial estat
That ther was nowher swich another man.

This noble kyng, this Tartre Cambyus-
kan,

Haddê two sones on Elpheta his wyf,
Of whichê the eldeste hightê Algarsyf ; ³⁰
That oother sone was clepêd Cambalo.
A doghter hadde this worthy kyng also
That yongest was, and hightê Canacee,
But for to tellê yow al hir beautee
It lyth nat in my tonge, nyn my konnyng ;
I dar nat undertake so heigh a thyng ;
Myn Englissh eek is insufficient ;
It mostê been a rethor excellent,
That koude his colours longynge for that
art,

If he sholde hire discryven every part ; ⁴⁰
I am noon swich, I moot speke as I kan,

And so bifel that whan this Cambyuskan
Hath twenty wynter born his diademe,
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme,
He leet the fceste of his nativitee
Doon cryen thurghout Sarray his citee,
The last Idus of March after the yeer.

Phebus, the sonne, ful joly was and
cleer,

For he was neigh his exaltacioun
In Martês face, and in his mansioun ⁵⁰
In Aries, the colerik hootê signe.

Ful lusty was the weder and benigne,
For which the foweles agayn the sonnê
sheene,

What for the sesoun and the yongê grenc,
Ful loudê songen hire affeccaciouns,

31. *Cambalo*. Keightley suggests that the name was taken from Kublai Khan's capital, Cambaluc.

47. *The last Idus*, March 15. On this day the sun would be in the 4th degree of Aries, approaching his highest exaltation in the 19th degree. The first ten degrees of Aries were called the face of Mars.

Hem semed han geten hem protecciouns
Agayn the swerd of wynter, keene and
coold.

This Cambyuskan—of which I have
yow toold—

In roial vestiment sit on his deys,
With diademe, ful heighe in his paleys, 60
And hálft his feeste so solempne and so
ryche,

That in this world ne was thernoon it lyche;
Of which, if I shal tellen al tharray,
Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day;
And cek it nedeth nat for to devyssc
At every cours the ordre of hire servyse.
I wol nat tellen of hir strangé sewes,
Ne of hir swannes, ne of hire heron sewes.
Eek in that lond, as tellen knyghtés olde,
Ther is som mete that is ful deynté holde 70
That in this lond men recche of it but smal;
Ther nys no man that may reporten al.

I wol nat taryen yow, for it is pryme,
And for it is no fruyt, but los of tyme;
Unto my firste I wole have my recours.

And so bifel that after the thridde cours,
Whil that this kyng sit thus in his nobleye,
Her knynghe his mynstralés hir thyngés pleye
Biforn hym at the bord deliciously,
In at the hallé dore, al so deynly, 80
Ther cam a knyght upon a steede of bras,
And in his hand a brood mirour of glas;
Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ring,
And by his syde a naked swerd hangyng;
And up he rideth to the heighé bord.
In al the halle ne was ther spoken a word,
For merveille of this knyght; hym to
biholde

Ful bisily ther wayten yonge and olde.

This strangé knyght that cam thus
so deynly,

Al arméd, save his heed, ful richely, 90
Saleweth kyng and queene, and lordés alle,
By ordre, as they seten in the halle,
With so heigh reverence and obeisaunce,
As wel in speché as in contaunce,
That Gawayn, with his oldé curteisye,
Though he were comen ageyn out of fairye,
Ne koude hym nat amendé with a word;
And after this, biforn the heighé bord,
He with a manly voys seith his message
After the forme uséd in his langage, 100

Withouten vice of silable, or of lettre;
And for his talé sholdé seme the better,
Accordant to his wordés was his cheere,
As techeth art of speche hem that it leere.
Al be it that I kan nat sowne his stile,
Ne kan nat clymben over so heigh a style,
Yet seye I this, as to commune entente,
Thus muche amounteth al that ever he
mente,

If it so be that I have it in mynde.

He seyde, 'The kyng of Arabe and of
Inde, 110

My ligé lord, on this solempné day
Saleweth yow, as he best kan and may,
And sendeth yow, in honour of youre feeste,
By me, that am al redy at youre heeste,
This steede of bras, that esily and weel
Kan in the space of o day naturecl,—
This is to seyn, in foure and twenty
houres,—

Wher so yow lyst, in droghte or ellés
shoures,

Beren youre body into every place 119
To which youre herté wilneth for to pace,
Withouten wem of yow, thurgh foul or fair;
Or, if yow lyst to fleen as hye in the air,
As dooth an egle whan hym list to soore,
This samé steede shal bere yow evermoore,
Withouten harm, til ye be ther yow leste,
Though that ye slepen on his bak, or reste;
And turne ageyn with writhyng of a pyn.
He that it wroughté koude ful many a gyn.
He wayted many a constellacioun
Er he had doon this operacioun, 130
And knew ful many a seel, and many a bond.

'This mirour eek, that I have in myn
hond,

Hath swich a myght that men may in it see
Whan ther shal fallen any adversitee
Unto youre regne, or to youre self also,
And openly who is youre freend or foo;
And over al this, if any lady bright
Hath set hire herte on any maner wight,
If he be fals he shal his tresoun see,
His newé love, and al his subtiltee, 140
So openly that ther shal no thyng hyde.
Wherefore, ageyn this lusty someres tyde,
This mirour and this ryng that ye may see
He hath sent to my lady Canacee,
Yowre excellenté doghter that is heere.

'The vertu of the ryng, if ye wol heere,
Is this, that if hire lust it for to were
Upon hir thombe, or in hir purs it bere,
Ther is no fowel that fleeth under the hevene
That she ne shal wel understonde his
stevene, 150

And knowe his menyng openly and pleyn,
And answer hym in his langage ageyn;
And every gras that groweth upon roote
She shal eek knowe and whom it wol do
boote,

Al be his woundes never so depe and
wyde.

'This naked swerd that hangeth by my
syde

Swich vertu hath that what man so yesmyte,
Thurghout his armure it wol kerve and
byte,

Were it as thikke as is a branched ook;
And what man that is wounded with the
strook 160

Shal never behool, til that yow list of grace
To stroke hym with the plat in thilk place
Ther he is hurt; this is as much to seyn,
Ye moot with the platt swerd ageyn
Strike hym in the wounde and it wol close.
This is a verray sooth, withouten glose,
It failleth nat whil it is in youre hoold.'

And whan this knyght hath thus his
talé toold,

He rideth out of halle, and doun he lighte.
His steedé, which that shoon as sonnè
bryghte, 170

Stant in the court as stille as any stoon.
This knyght is to his chambré lad anon,
And is unarmed and unto mete y-set.

The presentes been ful roially y-fet,—
This is to seyn, the swerd and the mirour,—
And born anon into the heigh tour,
With certeine officers ordeyned therfore;
And unto Canacee this ryng was bore
Solempnely, ther she sit at the table;
But sikerly, withouten any fable, 180
The hors of bras, that may nat be remewed,
It stant as it were to the ground y-glewed;
Ther may no man out of the place it dryve
For noon engyn of wyndas ne polyve;
And causé why? for they kan nat the craft;
And therfore in the place they han it laft,

165. strike, H⁵ stroke.

Til that the knyght hath taught hem the
manere

To voyden hym, as ye shal after heere.

Greet was the prees that swarmeth to
and fro 189

To gauren on this hors that stonde so;
For it so heigh was, and so brood and long,
So wel proporcioned for to been strong,
Right as it were a steede of Lumbardye;
Ther-with so horsly, and so quyk of eye,
As it a gentil Poilleys courser were;
For certès, fro his tayl unto his ere,
Nature ne art ne koude hym nat amende
In no degree, as al the peple wende.

But evermoore hir moost wonder was
How that it koudé go, and was of bras!
It was of fairye, as al the peple semed. 201
Diversé folk diversely they demed;
As many heddes as many wittes ther been.
They murmureden as dooth a swarm of
been,

And maden skiles after hir fantasies,
Rehersynge of thise oldé poetries;
And seyde that it was lyk the Pegasee,
The hors that haddé wyngés for to flee;
Or elles it was the Grekés hors, Synoun,
That broghté Troié to destruccioun, 210
As men may in thise oldé geestés rede.

'Myn herte,' quod oon, 'is evermoore
in drede;

I trowe som men of armés been ther-inne,
That shapen hem this citee for to wynne;
It were right good that al swich thyng
were knowe.'

Another rowndé to his felawe lowe,
And seyde, 'He lyeth! it is rather lyk
An apparence, y-maad by som magyk;
As jogelours playen at thise feestés grete.'
Of sondry doutés thus they jangle and trete,
As lewéd peple demeth comunly 221
Of thyngés that been maad moore subtilly
Than they kan in hir lewednesse compre-
hende,

They demen gladly to the badder ende.

And somme of hem wondred on the
mirour

That born was up into the hye tour,

195. Poilleys, Apulian.

201. the peple, E² at the peple.

217. it, H⁵ for it.

226. hye, H⁵ maistre.

How men myghte in it swichè thyngès se.
Another answerde and seyde it myghte
wel be

Naturally, by composiciouns
Of angles, and of slye reflexiouns ; 230
And seyden that in Romè was swich oon.
They speken of Alocen and Vitulon,
And Aristotle, that writen in hir lyves
Of queynté mirours, and of prospectives,
As knowen they that han hir bookès herd.

And oother folk han wondred on the
swerd

That woldè percen thurghout every thyng ;
And fille in speche of Thelophus the kyng,
And of Achilles with his queynté spere,
For he koude with it bothè heele and dere,
Right in swich wise as men may with the
swerd 241

Of which right now ye han youre-selven
herd.

They speken of sondry hardyng of metal,
And speke of medicynès therwithal,
And how and whanne it sholdey-harded be,
Which is unknowe, alगतés unto me.

Tho speekè they of Canaces kyng,
And seyden alle that swich a wonder thyng
Of craft of ryngès herde they never noon ;
Save that he Moyses and kyng Salomon
Hadden a name of konnyng in swich art ;
Thus seyn the peple and drawn hem
apart.

But nathèlees somme seiden that it was
Wonder to maken of fern-asshen glas,
And yet nys glas nat lyk asshen of fern,
But for they han i-knowen it so fern
Therefore cesseth hir janglyng and hir
wonder.

As soorè wondren somme on cause of
thonder,

On ebbe, on flood, on gossomer, and on
myst, 259

And on alle thyng til that the cause is wist,
Thus jangle they, and demen and devyse,
Til that the kyng gan fro the bord arysc.

231. *in Rome*, an allusion to the wizardries attributed to Virgil.

232. *Alocen and Vitulon*. Alhazen was an Arab astronomer of the 11th century, and Vitellio a Polish one of the 13th.

238. *Thelophus*, Telephus of Mysia, wounded and healed by the spear of Achilles.

Phebus hath laft the angle meridional,
And yet ascendynge was the beest roial,
The gentil Leon, with his Aldrian,
When that this Tarrè kyng Cambyuskan
Roos fro his bord, ther as he sat ful hye.
Toforn hym gooth the loudè mynstralcyce
Til he cam to his chambre of parementz ;
Ther as they sownen diverse instrumentz
That it is lyk an hevene for to heere. 271
Now dauncen lusty Venus children deere,
For in the Fyssh hir lady sat ful hye,
And looketh on hem with a freendly eye.

This noble kyng is set up in his trone ;
This strangè knyght is fet to hym ful soone,
And on the daunce he gooth with Canacee.
Heere is the revel and the jolitee
That is nat able a dul man to devyse ; 279
Hemostelan knowen love and his servyse,
And been a feestlych man, as fresshas May,
That sholdè yow devyisen swich array.

Who koudè tellè yow the forme of
daunces

So unkouthè, and so fressshè contenaunces,
Swich subtil lookyng and dissymulynges
For drede of jalouse mennes aperceyv-
ynges ?

No man but Launcelet, and he is deed.
Therefore I passe of al this lustiheed ;
I sey namoore, but in this jolynesse
I lete hem til men to the soper dresse.

The styward byt the spices for to hwe,
And eek the wyn, in al this melodye.
The usshers and the squiers been y-goön,
The spices and the wyn is come anon.
They ete and drynke, and whan this hadde
an ende,

Unto the temple, as reson was, they wende.

The service doon they soupen al by day ;
What nedeth yow rehercen hire array ?

Éch man woot wel that a kyngès feeste 299
Hath plentee to the mooste and to the leeste,
And deyntees mo than been in my knowyng.

At after soper gooth this noble kyng
To seen this hors of bras, with all the
route

Of lordès and of ladyes hym aboute.

263. *angle meridional*. The southern angle answered to the time from 10 A.M. to noon.

265. *Aldrian*, or Aldiran, the star marking the Lion's fore-paws.

273. *the Fyssh*. Venus is 'exalted' in Piscis.

Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of
bras

That syn the greté sege of Troië was,—
Ther as men wondreden on an hors also,—
Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho.
But synally, the kyng axeth this knyght
The vertu of this courser, and the myght,
And preydë hym to telle his governaunce.

This hors anon bigan to trippe and
daunce

Whan that this knyght leyde hand upon
his reyne,

And seyde, 'Sire, ther is namoore to seyne,
But whan yow list to ryden anywhere
Ye mooten trille a pyn, stant in his ere,
Which I shal tellë yow bitwix us two.
Ye mootë nempne hym to what place also,
Or to what contree, that yow list to ryde;
And whan ye come ther as yow list abyde,
Bidde hym descende, and trille another
pyn, --

For therin lith theffect of al the gyn,--
And he wol down descende and doon youre
wille,

And in that placë he wol stondë stille.
Though al the world the contrarie hadde
y-swore,

I shal nat thennës been y-draweney-bore;
Or, if yow listë bidde hym thennës goon,
Trillë this pyn, and he wol vanysshe anon
Out of the sighte of every maner wight,
And come agayn, be it by day or nyght,
Whan that yow list to clepen hym ageyn
In swich a gyse as I shal to yow seyn,
Bitwixë yow and me, and that ful soone.
Ride whan yow list, ther is namoore to
doone.'

Enformëd whan the kyng was of that
knyght,

And hath conceyvëd in his wit aright
The manere and the forme of al this thyng,
Ful glad and blithethis noble doughty kyng
Repeireth to his revel as biforn.

The byrdel is unto the tour y-born
And kept among his jueles leeve and deere,
The hors vanysshed, I noot in what manere,
Out of hir sighte,—ye gete namoore of me;
But thus I lete in lust and jolitee
This Cambyuskan his lordës festeiynge,
Til wel ny the day bigan to sprynge.

[PART II]

The norice of digestioun, the sleepe,
Gan on hem wynke, and bad hem taken
keepe

That muchel drynke and labour wolde
han reste;

And with a galpyng mouth hem alle he
keste,

And seyde, it was tyme to lye adoun,
For blood was in his domynacioun.

'Cherisseth blood, natürës freend,' quod he.
They thanken hym galpyngë, by two, by
thre,

And every wight gan drawe hym to his reste,
As sleepe hem bad; they tooke it for the
beste.

Hiire dremës shul nat been y-toold forme;
Ful were hire heddës of fumositee,
That causeth drem, of which ther nys no
charge.

They slepen til that it was prymë large,
The moostë part, but it were Canacee.

She was ful mesurable, as wommen be;
For of hir fader hadde she takë leve
To goon to reste, soone after it was eve.

Hir listë nat appallëd for to be,
Ne on the morwe unfecstlich for to se,
And slepte hire firstë sleepe and thanne
awook;

For swich a joyë she in hir hertë took,
Bothe of hir queyntë ryng and hire mirour,
That twenty tyme she changëd hir colour,
And in hire sleepe, right for impressioun
Of hire mirour, she hadde a visioun.

Wherfore er that the sonnë gan up glyde
She clepëd on hir maistresse hire bisyde,
And seyde that hire listë for to ryse.

Thise oldë wommen that been gladly
wyse,

As is hire maistresse, answerde hire anon,
And seyde, 'Madame, whider wil ye goon
Thus erly, for the folk been alle on reste?'

'I wol,' quod she, 'arisë,—for me leste
No lenger for to slepe,—and walke
aboute.'

^{352.} *blood*, etc. The blood was supposed to be
'in domination' from 9 P.M. to 3 A.M.
^{360.} *pryme large*, full prime, i.e. 9 A.M.

Hire maistresse clepeth wommen a
greet route,
And up they rysen, wel a ten or twelve ;
Up riseth fresshe Canacee hir-selve,
Asrodyand bright asdooth theyongesonne
That in the Ram is foure degrees up ronnc.
Noon hyer was he whan she redy was,
And forth she walketh esily a pas,
Arrayed after the lusty sesoun soote 389
Lightly, for to pleye and walke on foote,
Nat but with fyve or sixe of hir meynce,
And in a trench, forth in the park, gooth
she.

The vapour, which that fro the erthéglood,
Madè the sonne to semè rody and brood,
But nathéles it was so fair a sighte
That it madealle hirehertès for to lighte,—
What for the sesoun, and the morwýnge,
And for the foweles that she herdè synge ;
For right anon she wistè what they mente
Right by hirsong, and knewal hire entente.

The knottè why that every tale is toold,
If it be taried til that lust be coold
Of hem that han it after herkedn yore,
The savour passeth ever lenger the moore,
For fulsomnesse of his prolixitee ;
And by the samè resoun thynketh me,
I sholdè to the knotte condescende
And maken of hir walkyng soone an ende.

Amydde a tree fordrye, as whit as chalk,
As Canacee was pleying in hir walk, 410
Ther sat a faucon over hire heed ful hye,
That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
That all the wode resounèd of hire cry.
Y-beten hath she hir-self so pitously
With bothe hir wyngès til the redè blood
Ran endèlong the tree ther as she stood,
And ever in oon she cryde alwey and
shrighte,

And with hir beek hir-selven soshe prighte,
That ther nystygre, ne noon so crueel beest,
That dwelleth outhir in wode or in forest,
That nolde han wept, if that he wepèkoude,
For sorwe of hire, she shrighte alwey so
loude ;

For ther nas never yet no man on lyve,—

386. *foure* (H⁴ *ten*), cp. l. 51 and note. At its rising on the 16th March the sun would be passing from the 4th degree to the 5th.

If that I koude a faucon wel discryve,—
That herde of swich another of fairnesse,
As wel of plumage as of gentillesse
Of shape, and al that myghtey-rekned be.
A faucon peregryn thannc semèd she
Of fremdè land, and evermoore, as she
stood,

She swowneth now and now for lakke of
blood, 430
Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.

This fairè kyngès doghter, Canacee,
That on hir fynger baar the queyntè ryng,
Thurgh which she understood wel every
thyng

That any fowel may in his leden seyn,
And koude answerc hym in his ledene
ageyn,

Hath understandè what this faucon seyde,
And wel neigh for the routhe almoost she
deyde ;

And to the tree she gooth ful hastily,
And on this faukon looketh pitously, 440
And heeld hir lappe abrood, for wel she
wiste

The faukon mostè fallen fro the twiste,
Whan that it swownèd next, for lakke of
blood.

A longè while to wayten hire she stood,
Til attè laste she spak in this manere
Unto the hauk, as ye shal after heere :

‘What is the cause, if it be for to telle,
That ye be in this furial pyne of helle ?’

Quod Canacee unto the hauk above. 449
‘Is this for sorwe of deeth, or los of love ?’

For, as I trowè, thise been causes two
That causen moost a gentil hertè wo.
Of oother harm it nedeth nat to speke,
For ye youre-self upon your-self yow wreke,
Which proveth well that outhir love or
drede

Moot been enchesoun of youre cruel dede,
Synthat I see noon oother wight yow chace.
For love of God, as dooth youre-selven
grace,

Or what may been youre helpe ; for West
nor Est

428. *peregryn*, the pilgrim falcon, so called because it keeps away from its nest.

436. *answere*, E. *answerven*.

455. *love*, H⁶ *ire*.

Ne saugh I never, er now, no bryd ne
beest 460

That ferdé with hymself so pitously.
Ye sle me with youre sorwé, verrailly ;
I have of yow so greet compassioun.
For Goddés love, com fro the tree adoun ;
And, as I am a kyngés doghter trewe,
If that I verrailly the causé knewe
Of youre disese, if it lay in my myght,
I wolde amenden it er it were nyght,
As wisly helpe me greté God of kynde !
And herbés shal I right ynowe y-fynde
To heelé with youre hurtés hastily.' 471

Tho shrighthe this faucon yet moore
pitously

Than evershe dide, and fil to grounde anon,
And lith aswowné, deed, and lyk a stoon,
Til Canacee hath in hire lappe hire take
Unto the tyme she gan of swough awake ;
And after that she of hir swough gan breyde
Right in hir hawkés ledene thus she seyde :
' That pitee renneth soone in gentil herte,
Fecelynge his similitude in peynés smerte,
Is prevéd al day, as men may it see, 481
As wel by werk as by auctoritee ;
For gentil herte kitheth gentillesse.
I se wel that ye han of my distresse
Compassioun, my fairé Canacee,
Of verray wommanly benignytee
That nature in youre principles hath set ;
But for noon hopé for to fare the bet,
But for to obeye unto youre herté free,
And for to maken othere be war by me,
As by the whelpe chastid is the leoun, 491
Right for that cause and that conclusioun,
Whil that I have a leyser and a space,
Myn harm I wol confessen, er I pace.'
And ever whil that oon hir sorwe tolde
That oother weepe as she to water wolde,
Til that the faucon had hire to be stille,
And, with a syk, right thus she seyde hir
wille.

' Ther I was bred, alas ! that hardé
day,— 499

And fostred in a roche of marbul gray
So tendrily that no thyng eyléd me,—
I nysté nat what was adversitee
Til I koude flee ful hye under the sky—
Tho dwelte a tercélet me fasté by,

472. yet, om. H².

That seméd welle of allé gentillesse ;
Al were he ful of tresoun and falsnesse,
It was so wrappéd under humble cheere,
And under hewe of trouthe in swich manere,
Under plesance, and under bisy peyne,
That I ne koude han wend he koudé feyne,
So depe in greyn he dyéd his coloures.
Right as a serpent hit hym under floures
Til he may seen his tymé for to byte,
Right so this god of love, this ypocryte,
Dooth so his cerymonyes and obeisaunces,
And kepeh in semblant alle his obser-
vaunces

That sowneth into gentillesse of love.

As in a tounge is al the faire above,
And under is the corps, swich as ye woot,
Swich was the ypocrite, bothe coold and
hoot, 520

And in this wise he servéd his entente,
That save the feend, noon wisté what he
mente

Til he so longe hadle wopen and com-
pleyned,

And many a yeer his service to me feyned,
Til that myn herte, to pitous and to nyce,
Al innocent of his coroumed malice,
For-feréd of his deeth, as thoughté me,
Upon his othés and his seurétee,
Graunted hym love upon this condicioun,
That evermoore myn honour and renoun
Were savéd, bothé privee and apert : 531
This is to seyn, that after his desert,
I yaf hym al myn herté and my thought,—
God woot, and he, that otherwisé noght,—
And took his herte in chaunge for myn
for ay ;

But sooth is seyde, goon sithen many a day,
" A trewe wight and a thief thenken nat
oon " ;

And whan he saugh the thyng so fer y-goone
That I hadde graunted hym fully my love,
In swich a gyse as I have seyde above, 540
And yeven hym my trewé herte as fre
As he swoor he yaf his herté to me ;
Anon this tigre ful of doublenesse
F'il on his knees with so devout hum-
blesse,

510. I ne, H⁵ no wight.

515. obeisaunces, H⁵ observaunce, reading in
next line, Under subtil colour and aqueyntaunce.

With so heigh reverence, and, as by his
cheere,

So lyk a gentil love of manere,
So ravysshed, as it semed, for the joye,
That never Jason, ne Parys of Troye,—
Jason? Certès, ne noon oother man
Syn Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan 550
To loven two, as writen folk biforn;
Ne never, syn the firste man was born,
Ne koudé man, by twenty thousand part,
Countrefetè the sophymes of his art,
Ne weré worthy unbokelen his galoche
Ther doublenesse or feynnyng sholde
approche,

Ne so koude thanke a wight as he dide me!
His manere was an hevenc for to see
Til any womman, were she never so wys,
So peynted he, and kembde at point-
devys, 560

As wel his wordés as his contenance;
And I so loved hym for his obeisaunce,
And for the trouthe I deméd in his herte,
That if so were that any thyng hym smerte,
Al were it never so lite, and I it wiste,
Methoughte I feltè deeth myn hertétwiste;
And shortly, so ferforth this thyng is went,
That my wyl was his willés instrument,—
This is to seyn, my wyl obeyed his wyl
In allé thyng, as fer as resoun fil, 570
Kepynge the boundés of my worshiþe ever;
Ne never hadde I thyng so lief, ne lever,
As hym, God woot! ne never shal namo.
This lasteth lenger than a yeer or two
That I supposéd of hym noght but good;
But finally thus, atté laste it stood,
That Fortune woldé that he mosté twynne
Out of that placé which that I was inne.
Wher me was wo, that is no questioun;
I kan nat make of it discripsioun, 580
For o thyng dare I tellen boldély,
I knowe what is the peyne of deeth ther-by;
Swich harme I felte for he ne myghte
bileve!

So on a day of me he took his leve,
So sorful eek that I wende verraily
That he had felt as muché harm as I,

548. Jason, E² *Troilus*, an impossible reading.

550. Lameth, Genesis iv. 19.

583. he, E I

585. sorful, E⁶ *sorwefully*.

Whan that I herde hym speke and saugh
his hewe;

But nathelees I thoughte he was so trewe,
And eek that he repairé sholde ageyn
Withinne a litel while, sooth to seyn, 590
And resoun wolde eek that he mosté go
For his honour, as ofte it happeth so,
That I made vertu of necessitee,
And took it wel, syn that it mosté be.
As I best myghte I hidde fro hym mysorwe
And took hym by the hond, Seint John to
borwe,

And seyde hym thus: "Lo, I am yourés al;
Bethswich as I to yow have been and shal."
What heanswerde it nedeth noght reherce;
Who kan sey bet than he, who kan do
werse? 600

Whan he hath al i-seyd, thanne hatli he
doon.

"Therefore bihoveth hire a ful long spoon
That shal ete with a feend," thus herde I
seye;

So atté laste he mosté forth his weye,
And forth he fleeth til he cam ther hym
leste,

Whan it cam hym to purpos for to reste.
I trowe he haddé thilké text in mynde,
That "Allé thyng repeyringe to his kynde
Gladeth hymself,"—thus seyn men, as I
gesse.

Men loven of propré kynde newefangel-
nesse, 610

As briddés doon that men in cages fede;
For though thou nyght and day take of
hem hede,

And strawe hir cagé faire, and softe as silk,
And yeve hem sugre, hony, breed and milk,
Yet right anon as that his dore is uppe,
He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,
And to the wode he wole, and wormés ete;
So newefangel been they of hire mete:
And loven novelrie of propré kynde,
No gentilless of blood ne may hem
bynde. 620

'So ferde this tercèlet, allas, the day!
Though he were gentil born, fresshand gay,
And goodlich for to seen, humble and free.
He saugh upon a tyme a kyté flee,

601. i-seyd, H⁵ *wel seyde*.

602. hire, H⁴ *him*.

And soðeynly he loved this kytè so
That al his love is clene fro me ago,
And hath his trouthe falsèd in this wyse.
Thus hath the kyte my love in hire servyse,
And I am lorn withouten remedie.' 629
And with that word this faucon gan to crie,
And swowned eft in Canacées barm.

Greet was the sorwe for the haukès harm
That Canacee and alle hir women made;
They nystè how they myghte the faucon
glade,

But Canacee hom bereth hire in hir lappe,
And softly in plastres gan hire wrappe,
Ther as she with hire beek hadde hurt hir-
selve.

Now kan nat Canacee but herbès delve
Out of the ground, and makè salvès newe
Of herbès preciose, and fyne of hewe, 640
To heelen with this hauk; fro day to nyght
She dooth hire bisynesse and al hir myght,
And by hire beddès heed she made a mewe,
And covered it with veluettès blewè,
In signe of trouthe that is in women sene,
And al withoute the mewe is peynted grene,
In which were peynted alle thise falsè
fowles,

As beth this etidylves, tercèlletes and owles;
And pyès, on hem for to crie and chyde,
Right for despit, were peynted hem bisyde.

Thus lete I Canacee, hir hauk kepyng,
I wol namore as now speke of hir ryng
Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
How that this faucon gat hire love ageyn,
Repentant, as the storie telleth us,
By mediacioun of Cambalus,
The kyng's sone, of whichè I yow tolde;
But hennès-forth I wol my proces holde
To speken of aventures and of batailles,
That never yet was herl so greet mer-
vailles. 660

First wol I tellè yow of Cambyuskan,
That in his tymè many a citee wan;
And after wol I speke of Algarsif,
How that he wan Theodera to his wif,
For whom ful ofte in greet peril he was,
Ne hadde he ben holpè by the steede of
bras;

And after wol I speke of Cambalo,

649, 650. These two lines are reversed in the six MSS.; Camb.⁴ omitting *And*.

That faught in lystès with the bretheren two
For Canacee, er that hemyghte hire wyne;
And ther I lefte I wol ageyn bygnne. 670

[PART III]

Appollo whirleth up his chaar so hye,
Til that the god Mercurius hous, the slye—

*Heere folwen the wordes of the Frankelyn
to the Squier, and the wordes of the
Hoost to the Frankelyn*

'In feith, Squier, thow hast thee wel
y-quit

And gentilly, I preisè wel thy wit,
Quod the Frankelēyn, 'consideryng thy
yowthe

So feelyngly thou spekest, sire, I allowe the,
As to my doom ther is noon that is heere
(Of eloquencè that shal be thy peere,
If that thou lyve! God yevè thee good
chaunce,

And in vertu sende thee continuaunce; 680
For of thy speche I have greet deyntee.
I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee!
I haddè levere than twenty pound worth
lond,
Though it right now were fallen in myn
hond,

He were a man of swich discrecioun
As that ye been; fy on possessioun,
But if a man be vertuous withal!
I have my sonè snybbèd and yet shal,
For he to vertu listeth nat entende, 689
But for to pleye at dees, and to despēde
And lese al that he hath, is his usage;
And he hath levere talken with a page
Than to comune with any gentil wight,
There he myghte lernè gentillesse aright.'

'Straw for youre "gentillesse," quod
our Hoost.

'What! Frankelēyn, *pardee*, sire, wel
thou woost

That ech of yow moot tellen attè leste
A tale or two, or breken his biheste.'

'That knowe I wel, sire,' quod the
Frankelēyn,

'I prey yow haveth me nat in desdeyn 700
Though to this man I speke a word or two.'

672. The 'half-told' tale breaks off here.

'Telle on thy tale, withouten wordès
mo !'

'Gladly, sire Hoost,' quod he, 'I wole
obeye

Unto your wyl; now herkneth what I seye.
I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse
As fer as that my wittès wol suffyse ;
I prey to God that it may plesen yow,
Thanne woot I wel that it is good ynow.'

The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale

Thise oldè, gentil Britons, in hir dayes,
Of diverse aventure's maden layes, ⁷¹⁰
Rymeyèd in hir firstè Briton tonge,
Whiche layès with hir instrumentz they
songe,

Or ellès reddèn hem for hir plesaunce,
And oon of hem have I in rémembraunce,
Which I shal seyn with good wyl as I kan.

But, sires, by-cause I am a burel man,
At my bigynnyng first I yow biseche,
Have me excusèd of my rudè speche.
I lernèd never rethoric certeyn ;
Thyng that I speke it moot be bare and
pleyn. ⁷²⁰

I sleepe never on the Mount of Pernaso,
Ne lernèd Marcus Tullius Scithero.
Colours ne knowe I none, withouten drede,
But swichè colours as growen in the mede,
Or ellès swichè as men dye or peynte.
Colours of rethoryk been me to queynte ;
My spirit feelth noght of swich matere,
But if yow list my talè shul ye heere.

FRANKLIN'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Frankeleyns Tale

In Armorik, that callèd is Britayne,
Ther was a knyght that loved and didè
his payne ⁷³⁰
To serve a lady in his bestè wise ;
And many a labour, many a greet emprise,

^{714.} *oon of hem, etc.* This distinct statement (cp. l. 813) leaves no doubt that this tale follows, probably with some closeness, a French or Breton story, unluckily now lost.

^{721.} To disprove his claim of lack of letters he quotes Persius (Prol. l. 2).

Hefor his lady wroghte, er she were wonne ;
For she was oon the faireste under sonne,
And eek therto come of so heigh kynrede,
That wel unnethès dorste this knyght, for
drede,

Telle hire his wo, his peyne, and his
distresse ;

But attè laste she for his worthynesse,
And namely for his meke obeysaunce,
Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce,
That prively she fil of his accord, ⁷⁴¹
To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord,
Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir
wyves,

And for to lede the moore in blisse hir lyves,
Of his free wyl he swoor hire as a knyght,
That never in al his lyf he, day ne nyght,
Ne sholde upon hym takè no maistrie
Agayn hir wyl, ne kithe hire jalousie ;
But hire obeye and folwe hir wyl in al,
As any love to his lady shal, ⁷⁵⁰
Save that the name of soveraynètee,
That wolde he have, for shame of his degree.

She thankèd hym and with ful greet
humblesse,
She seyde, 'Sire, sith of youre gentillesse
Ye profe me to have so large a reyne,
Ne woldè never God bitwixe us tweyne,
As in my gilt, were outhere werre or stryf.
Sire, I wol be youre humble, trewè wyf ;
Have heer my trouthe, til that myn hertè
breste' ;

Thus been they bothe in quiete and in reste.

For o thyng, sirès, sauffy dar I seye, ⁷⁶¹
That freendès everych outhere moot obeye,
If they wol longè holden compaignye.
Love wol nat been constreynèd by maistrie.
Whan maistrie comth, the god of love,
anon,

Beteth his wynges and, farewell, he is gon !
Love is a thyng as any spirit free.
Wommen of kynde desiren libertee,
And nat to been constreynèd as a thral ;
And so doon men, if I sooth seyen shal.
Looke, who that is moost pacient in love,
He is at his advantage al above.
Paciencie is an heigh virtù, certeyn,
For it venquysseth, as these clerkès seyn,
Thyngs that rigour sholdè never atteyne ;

^{739.} *namely, especially.*

For every word men may nat chide or
pleyne.

Lerneth to suffre, or elles so moot I goon,
Ye shul it lerne, wher-so ye wole or noon;
For in this world, certein, ther no wight is
That he ne dooth, or seith, som tyme amys.
Iré, siknesse, or constellacioun, 781
Wyn, wo, or chaungynge of complexioun,
Causeth ful ofte to doon amys or speken.
On every wrong a man may nat be wroken;
After the tyme moste be temperaunce
To every wight that kan on governaunce;
And therfore hath this wisé, worthy
knyght,—

To lyve in escé,—suffraunce hire bihight,
And she to hym ful wisly gan to swere
That never sholde ther be defaut in here.

Heere may men seen an humble, wys
accord; 791
Thus hath she take hir servant and hir
lord,—

Servant in love, and lord in mariage,—
Thanne was he bothe in lordshipe and
servage.

Servagè? nay, but in lordshipe above;
Sith he hath both his lady and his love;
His lady, certès, and his wyf also,
The which that lawe of love acordeth to;
And whan he was in this prosperitee 799
Hoom with his wyf he gooth to his contree,
Nat fer fro Pedmark, ther his dwelling was,
Wher as he lyveth in blisse and in solas.

Who koudé telle, but he hadde wedded
be,

The joye, the escé, and the prosperitee
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf?

A yeer and moore lastéd this blisful lyf,
Til that the knyght of which I speke of thus,
That of Kayrrud was cleped Arveragus,
Shooper him to goon and dwelle a yeer or
tweyne 809

In Engélonde, that cleped was eek Briteyne,
To seke in armés worshipe and honour,
For al his lust he sette in swich labour;
And dwelléd there two yeer,—the book
seith thus.

Now wol I stynten of this Arveragus,

801. *Pedmark*, Penmark, on the west coast of
Brittany.

808. *Kayrrud*, the Red City.

And speken I wole of Dorigene his wyf,
That loveth hire housbonde as hire hertés
lyf;

For his absencé wepeth she and siketh,
As doon thise noble wyvès, whan hem
liketh;

She moorneth, waketh, wayleth, fasteth,
pleyneth; 819

Desir of his presence hire so distreyneth,
That al this wyldé world she sette at noght.
Hire freendés, whiche that knewe hir hevvy
thoght,

Conforten hire in al that ever they may.
They prechen hire, they telle hire, nyght
and day,

That causéless she sleeth herself, allas!
And every confort possible in this cas
They doon to hire with all hire bisynesse,
Al for to make hire leve hire hevynesse.

By proces, as ye knowen everichoon,
Men may so longé graven in a stoon 830
Til som figúre therinne emprented be.
So longe han they confortéd hire, til she
Receyvéd hath, by hope and by resoun,
The emprenting of hire consolacioun,
Thurgh which hir gretésorwé gan aswage;
She may nat alwey duren in swich rage.

And eek Arveagus in al this care
Hath sent hire lettres hoom of his welfare;
And that he wol come hastily agayn;
Or ellés hadde this sorwe hir herté slayn.

Hire freendés sawe hir sorwé gan to
slake, 841
And preyedé hir on knees, for Goddés
sake,

To come and romen hire in compaignye,
Awey to dryve hire derké fantasye;
And finally she graunted that requeste,
For wel she saugh that it was for the beste.

Now stood hire castel fasté by the see,
And often with hire freendés walketh shee,
Hire to disporte upon the bank an heigh,
Where as she many a shipe and bargé seigh
Seillynge hir cours, where as hem listé go;
But thanne was that a parcel of hire wo,
For to herself ful ofte 'Allas!' seith she,
'Is ther no shipe, of so manye as I se,
Wol bryngen hom my lord? Thanne were
myn herte

Al warissshed of his bittre peynés smerte.'

Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and
thynke,

And caste hir eyen dounward fro the
brynke ;

But whan she saugh the grisly rokkés blake,
For verray feere so wolde hir herté quake
That on hire feet she myghte hire noght
sustene ; 861

Thanne wolde she sitte adoun upon the
grene,

And pitously into the see biholde,
And seyn right thus, with sorweful sikés
colde,

‘Eterné God, that thurgh thy purvei-
aunce,

Ledest the world by certein governaunce,
In ydel, as men seyn, ye nothyng make ;
But, Lord, thise grisly, feendly, rokkés
blake,

That semen rather a foul confusioun
Of werk than any fair creacioun 870

Of swich a parfit wys God, and a stable,—
Why hanye wrought this werk unresonable?
For by this werk south, north, ne west,
ne est,

Thernys y-strofd man, ne bryd, ne beeste ;
It dooth no good, to my wit, but anoyeth ;
Se ye nat, Lord, how mankynde it de-
stroyeth ?

An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde
Han rokkés slayn, al be they nat in mynde,
Which mankynde is so fair part of thy werk,
That thou it madest lyk to thyn owen merk.

‘Thanne seméd it ye hadde a greet
chiertee 881

Toward mankynde, but how thanne may
it bee,

That ye swiche meenés make it to de-
stroyen,

Whiche meenés do no good, but ever
anoyen ?

I woot wel clerkés wol seyn as hem leste,
By argumentz, that al is for the beste,
Though I ne kan the causes nat y-knowe ;
But, thilké God that madé wynd to blowe,
As kepe my lord ; this is my conclusioun.
To clerkes lete I al disputisoun ; 890

But woldé God that alle thise rokkés blake
Were sonken into hellé for his sake.
Thise rokkés sleen myn herté for the feere.’

Thus wolde she seyn with many a pitous
tecre.

Hiire freendéssawe that it was no disport
To romen by the see, but discomfort,
And shopen for to pleyen somwher elles.
They leden hire by ryveres, and by welles,
And eek in othere places delitables ;
They dauncen, and they pleyen at ches
and tables. 900

So on a day, right in the morwe tyde,
Unto a gardyn that was ther bisyde,
In which that they hadde maad hir or-
dinaunce

Of vitaille, and of oother purveiaunce,
Theygoon and pleye hem al the longé day ;
And this was on the sixté morwe of May,
Which May hadde peynted with his soft
shoures

This gardyn, full of levés and of floures,
And craft of mannés hand so curiously
Arrayéd hadde this gardyn, trewély, 910
That never was ther gardyn of swich prys
But if it were the verray Paradys.

The odour of flourés and the fresshé sighte
Woldé han makéd any herté lighte
That ever was born, but if to greet siknesse,
Or to greet sorwé, helde it in distresse ;
So full it was of beautee with plesaunce.

At after dyner gonné they to daunce,
And synge also, save Dorigen allone,
Which made alwey hir compleint and hir
moone, 920

For she ne saugh hym on the dauncé go
That was hir housbonde, and hir love also ;
But nathélees she moste a tyme abyde
And with good hopé lete hir sorwe slyde.

Upon this daunce, amongés othere men,
Dauncéd a squier biforn Dorigen,
That fressher was, and jolyer of array,
As to my doom, than is the monthé of May ;
He syngeth, daunceth, passyngé any man
That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.
Therwith he was, if men sholde hym
discryve, 931

Oon of the besté farynge man on lyve,
Yong, strong, right vertuuous, and riche
and wys,

And wel biloved, and holden in greet prys.
And, shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal,
Unwityng of this Dorigen at al,

This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
Which that y-clepéd was Aurelius,
Hadde loved hire best of any creature
Two yeer and moore, as was his aventure;
But never dorste he tellen hire his
grevance; 947

Withouten coppe hedrankal his penaunce.
He was despeyréd, nothyng dorste he seye,
Save in his songés somewhat wolde he wreye
His wo, as in a general compleynyng;
He seyde he lovede, and was biloved no
thyng.

Of swich matèrè made he manye layes,
Songés, compleintés, roundels, virelayes;
How that he dorsté nat his sorwe telle,
But langwissheth as a furey dooth in helle;
And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko
For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.
In oother manere than ye heere me seye
Ne dorst he nat to hire his wo biwreye,
Save that paráventuresomtyme at daunces,
Ther yongé folk kepen hir observaunces,
It may wel be he lookéd on hir face
In swich a wise as man that asketh grace;
But no thyng wisté she of his entente;
Natheles it happéd, er theythennés wente,
By-cause that he was hire neighébour, 961
And was a man of worshipec and honour,
And hadde y-knownen hym of tyme yore,
They fille in speche, and forthé, moore
and moore,

Unto this purpos drough Aurelius.
And whan hesaugh his tyme hesayd thus:

'Madame,' quod he, 'by God that
this world made,
So that I wiste it myghte youre herté glade,
I wolde that day that youre Arveragus
Wente over the sec, that I, Aurelius, 970
Hadde went ther never I sholde have
come again;

For wel I woot my servyce is in vayn,
My gerdoun is but brestyng of myn herte.
Madamé, reweth upon my peynés smerte,
For with a word ye may me sleen or save;
Heere at youre feet God wolde that I
were grave!

I ne have, as now, no leysur moore to
seye, ---

950. *surge*, Heng.⁴ *surge*. *fire*, perhaps a better
reading.

Have mercy, sweete, or ye wol do medeye!'

She gan to looke upon Aurelius:
'Is this your wyl,' quod she, 'and sey ye
thus? 980

Never erst,' quod she, 'ne wiste I what
ye mente;

But now, Aurelie, I knowe youre entente,
By thilké God that yaf me soule and lyf!
Ne shal I never been untrewé wyf,
In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit,
I wol been his to whom that I am knyht!
Taak this for fynal answer, as for me';
But after that in pley thus seyde she:

'Aurelie,' quod she, 'by heighé God
above!

Yet wolde I graunté yow to been youre love,
Syn I yow se so pitously complayne. 991
Looké, what day that endélong Britayne,
Ye remoevealle the rokkés, stoon bystoon,
That they ne letté shipe ne boot to goon,—
I seye whan ye han maad the coost so clene
Of rokkés, that ther nys no stoon y-sene,
Thanne wol I love yow best of any man.
I have heer my trouthe, in al that ever I
kan.'

'Is ther noon oother grace in yow?'
quod he.

'No, by that Lord,' quod she, 'that
makéd me! 1000

For wel I woot that it shal never bityde.
Lat swiché folies out of youre herté slyde.
What deyntee sholde a man han in his lyf
For to go love another mannés wyf,
That hath hir body whan so that hym
lyketh?'

Aurelius ful ofté sooré siketh.

Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,
And with a sorweful herte he thus answerde:
'Madame,' quod he, 'this were an
impossible! 1009

Thanne moot I dye of sodeyn deth horrible!'
And with that word he turned hym anon.

Tho come hir othere freendés many oon.
And in the aleyes romeden up and doun,
And no thyng wiste of this conclusioun;
But sodeynly bigonné revel newe,
Til that the brighté sonné lost his hewe,
For thorisonte hath reft the sonne his
lyght,—

This is as muche to seye, as it was nyght;

And hoom they goon in joye and in solas,
 Save onoly wrecche Aurelius, allas ! 1020
 Heto his hous is goon with sorweful herte ;
 He seeth he may nat fro his deeth asterte,
 Hym semed that he felte his herté colde.
 Up to the hevene his handes he gan holde,
 And on his knowes bare he sette hym
 doun,

And in his ravyng seyde his orisoun.
 For verray wo out of his wit he breyde,
 He nyste what he spak, but thus he seyde.
 With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bigonne
 Unto the goddess, and first unto the sonne.

He seyde, 'Appollo, god and governour,
 Of every plaunté, herbé, tree and flour,
 That yevest after thy declinacioun
 To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun,
 As thyn herberwé chaungeth lowe or
 heighe ;

Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable cighe
 On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but
 lorn !

Lo, lord, my lady hath my deeth y-sworn
 Withouté gilt, but thy benignytee
 Upon my dedly herte have som pitee ; 1040
 For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow lest
 Ye may me helpen, save my lady, best.
 Now vouchethsauf that I may yow devyse
 How that I may been holpen and in what
 wyse.

'Youre blisful suster, Lucina thesheene,
 That of the see is chief goddesse and
 queene, —

Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,
 Yet emperisse aboven hym is she, —
 Ye knowe wel, lord, that right as hir desir
 Is to be quyked, and lightned of youre fir,
 For which she folweth yow ful bisily, 1051
 Right so the see desireth naturally
 To folwen hire, as she that is goddesse,
 Bothe in the see and ryveres moore and
 lesse.

Wherefore, lord Phebus, this is my requeste,
 Do this miracle, or do myn herté breste ;
 That now next at this opposicioun,
 Which in the signe shal be of the Leoun,
 As preieth hire so greet a flood to brynge,
 That fyve sadme at the leeste it over-
 spryng

1060

1045. *Lucina*, or *Diana*, the moon.

The hyeste rokke in Armorik Briteyne ;
 And lat this flood endurè yerès tweyne,
 Thanne certès to my lady may I seye,
 " Holdeth youre heste, the rokkès been
 aweye."

'Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for me ;
 Preye hire she go no faster cours than ye ;
 I seyè, preyceth your suster that she go
 No faster cours than ye thise yerès two ;
 Thanne shal she been evene attè fulle
 alway,

And spryng-flood lastè bothè nyght and
 day ; 1070

And, but she vouchesauf in swich manere
 To graunté me my sovereyn lady deere,
 Prey hire to synken every rok adoun
 Into hir owene dirké regioun
 Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth
 inne,

Or never-mo shal I my lady wyne.
 Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot
 seke, —

Lord Phebus, se the teeris on my cheke,
 And of my peyne have som compassioun !
 And with that word in swowne he fil adoun,
 And longé tyme he lay forth in a traunce.

His brother, which that knew of his
 penaunce,
 Up caughte hym, and to bedde he hath
 hym broght.

Dispeyréd in this torment and this thought,
 Lete I this woful creaturè lye ;
 Chese he, for me, wher he wol lyve or dye.

Arveragus with heele and greet honour,
 As he that was of chivalrie the flour,
 Is comen hoom, and othere worthy men.
 O, blisful artow now, thou Dorigen ! 1090
 That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne
 armes,

The fresshé knyght, the worthy man of
 armes,

That loveth thee as his owene hertès lyf.
 Nothyng list hym to been ymaginatyf,
 If any wight had spoke, whil he was oute,
 To hire of love ; he hadde of it no doute.
 He noght entendeth to no swich matere,
 But daunceth, justeth, maketh hire good
 cheere ;

1074. Under her name of *Hecate* *Diana* ruled
 also in the underworld.

And thus in joye and blisse I lete hem dwelle,

And of the sike Aurelius wol I telle. 1100

In langour and in torment furyus,
Two yeer and moore, lay wrecche Aurelyus
Er any foot he myghte on erthe gon;
Ne confort in this tyme hadde he noon,
Save of his brother, which that was a clerk.
He knew of al this wo and al this werk;
For to noon oother creature, certeyn,
Of this matere he dorste no word seyn;
Under his brest he baar it moore secree
Than ever dide Pamphilus for Gala-
thee. 1110

His brest was hool withoute for to sene,
But in his herte ay was the arwe kene;
And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
In surgerye is perilous the cure,
But men myghte touche the arwe, or come
therby.

His brother weepe and wayled pryvely,
Til attē laste hym fil in remembraunce
That whiles he was at Orliens in Fraunce,
As yongē clerkēs, that been lykerous
To reden artēs that been curious, 1120
Seken in every halke and every herne
Particuler sciēces for to lerne,—
He hym remembred that, upon a day,
At Orliens in studiē a book he say
Of magyk natureel, which his felawe,
That was that tyme a bachelor of lawe,
Al were he ther to lerne another craft,—
Hadde pryvely upon his desk y-laft,
Which book spak muchel of the operaciouns
Touchyng the eighte and twenty man-
siouns 1130

That longen to the moone, and swich folye
As in oure dayēs is nat worth a flye,—
For hooly churchēs feith, in oure bileve,
Ne suffreth noon illusion us to greve;
And whan this book was in his remem-
braunce,

Anon for joye his hertē gan to daunce,
And to hymself he seyde pryvely,
'My brother shal be warissshed hastily,
For I am siker that ther be sciēces 1139
By whiche men maken diverse apparences,

1110. *Pamphilus*, etc., a reference to the poem *Pamphilus de Amore*, of which Galatea was the heroine.

Swiche as thise subtil tregetourēs pleye.
For ofte at feestēs have I wel herd seye
That tregetours withinne an hallē large
Have maad come in a watcr and a barge,
And in the hallē rowen up and doun.
Somtyme hath semēd come a grym leoun,
And somtyme flourēsspryngeas in a mede;
Somtyme avyne, and grapes white and rede;
Somtyme a castel, al of lym and stoon,
And whan hem lykēd voyded it anon,—
Thus semēd it to everymannēs sighte. 1151
Now thanne conclude I thus, that if I
myghte

At Orliens som old felawe y-fynde,
That hadde these moonēs mansions in
mynde,

Or other magyk natureel above,
He sholde wel make my brother han his
love;

For with an apparence a clerk may make,
To mannēs sighte, that alle the rokkēs blake
Of Britaigne weren y-voyled everichon,
And shippēs by the brynkēcomen and gon;
And in swich forme enduren a wowke or
two. 1161

Thanne were my brother warissshed of his
wo;

Thanne moste she nedēs holden hire
biheste,

Or ellēs he shal shame hire attē leeste.'

What sholde I make a lenger tale of
this?

Unto his brotheres bed he comen is,
And swich confort he gaf hym for to gon
To Orliens, that he up stirte anon,
And on his wey forthward thanne is he fare
In hope for to been lissēd of his care.

Whan they were come almoost to that
citee, 1171

But if it were a two furlong or thre,
A yong clerk romynge by hymself they
mette,

Which that in Latyn thriiftily hem grette,
And after that he seyde a wonder thyng:
'I knowe,' quod he, 'the cause of youre
comyng,'—

And er they ferther any footē wente,
He tolde hem al that was in hire entene.

This Briton clerk hym askēd of felawes

1161. *wowke* (week), Heng.² *day*, Corp.² *yeer*.

The whiche that he had knowe in oldē
dawes ; 1180

And he answerdchym that they dedē were,
For which he weep ful oftē many a teere.

Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte anon,
And forth with this magicien is he gon
Hoom to his hous, and maden hem wel
at ese ;

Hem lakkēd no vitaille that myghte hem
plese,

So wel arrayed hous as ther was oon
Aurelius in his lyf saugh never noon.

He shewed hym, er he wentē to sopeer,
Forestēs, parkēs ful of wildē deer ; 1190
Ther saugh he hertēs with hir hornēs hye,
The gretteste that were ever seyn with
eye,—

He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with
houndes,

And somme with arwēs blede of bittrē
woundes.

He saugh, whan voyded were thise wildē
deer,

Thise fauconers upon a fair ry ver,
That with hir hawkēs han theheroun slayn.
Tho saugh he knyghtēs justyng in a playn,
And after this he dide hym swich ples-
aunce 1199

That he hym shewed his lady on a daunce,
On which hymself he dauncēd, as hym
thoughtē ;

And whan this maister that this magyk
wroughte

Saugh it was tyme, he clapte his handēs
two,

And, farewel ! al oure revel was ago.
And yet remoeved they never out of the
hous

Whil theysaugh al this sightē merveillous ;
But in his studie, ther as his bookēs be,
They seten stille, and no wight but they
thre.

To hym this maister callēd his squier,
And seyde hym thus : ' Is redy oure soper ?
Almoost an houre it is, I undertake, 1211
Sith I yow bad oure soper for to make,
Whan that thise worthy men wenten with
me

Into my studie, ther as my bookēs be.'

1205. was ago, Corp.³ is y-do.

'Sire,' quod this squier, 'whan it liketh
yow

It is al redy, though ye wol right now.'

'Go we thanne soupe,' quod he, 'as for
the beste ;

This amorous folk somtyme moote han
hir reste.'

At after soper fille they in trettee
What sommē sholde this maistrēs gerdoun
be 1220

To remoeven alle the rokkēs of Britayne,
And eek from Gerounde to the mouth of
Sayne.

He made it straunge, and swoor, so
God hym save !

Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde
nat have,

Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat
goon.

Aurelius, with blisful herte anoon,
Answerdē thus : ' Fy on a thousand
pound !

This wydē world, which that men seye
is round,

I wolde it yewe, if I were lord of it !

This bargayn is ful dryve, for we been
knyt 1230

Ye shal be payed trewely, by my trouthe,
But looketh now, for no necligence or
slouthē

Yetarie us heere no lenger than to morwe.'
'Nay,' quod this clerk, 'have heer my
feith to borwe.'

To bedde is goon Aurelius whan hym
leste,

And wel ny al that nyght he hadde his
reste.

What for his labour, and his hope of
blisse,

His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse.

Upon the morwe, whan that it was day,
To Britaigne tookē they the rightē way,—
Aurelius and this magicien bisyde ; 1241
And been descended ther they wolde abyde ;
And this was, as thise bookēs me remembre,
The coldē, frosty sesoun of Decembre.

Phebus wox old, and hewed lyk latoun,
That in his hootē declynacioun
Shoon as the burnēd gold, with stremēs
brighte ;

But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,
Where as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.
The bittre frostés with the sleet and reyn
Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd ;
Janus sit by the fyr with double berd,
And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn ;
Biforn hym stant brawn of the tuskéd swyn,
And ' *Novel* ' crieth every lusty man.

Aurelius in al that ever he kan
Dooth to his maister chiere and reverence,
And preyeth hym to doon his diligence
To bryngen hym out of his peynés smerte,
Or with a sword that he wolde slitte his
herte. 1260

This subtil clerk swich routhe had of
this man,

That nyght and day he spedde hym that
he kan

To wayten a tyme of his conclusioun,
This is to seye, to maken illusioun
By swich an apparence or jogelrye,—
I ne kan no termés of astrologye,—
That she and every wight sholde wene
and seye

That of Britaigne the rokkés were awaye,
Or ellés the were sonken under grounde.
So atté laste he hath his tyme y-founde
To maken his japés and his wrecchednesse
Of swich a supersticious cursednesse.
His tables Tolletanés forth he brought
Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakkéd nought,
Neither his collect, ne his expans yeeris,
Né his rootés, ne his othere geeris,
As been his centris, and his argumentz,
And his proporcioneles convenientz
For his equacions in every thyng ; 1279
And by his eighté speere in his wirkyng
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above,
That in the nynthé speere considered is ;

1248. in *Capricorn*. This would be on Dec. 13.
1273. *tables Tolletanes*, the astronomical tables,
drawn up by order of Alphonso X. of Castille,
and primarily adapted to the city of Toledo.

1275. *collect*, a table of a planet's motion during
a round number of years, as opposed to the *expans*,
or separate, years.

1280. *And by his eighté speere*. The astrologer
was calculating the precession of the equinoxes
by the distance between the true equinoctial
point—the head of the fixed Aries—and the nearest
convenient bright star, for which Alnath was
chosen.

Ful subtilly he kalkuléð al this.

Whan he hadde founde his firsté
mansioun,

He knew the remenaunt by proporcioun,
And knew the arisyng of his mooné weel,
And in whos face, and terme, and every-
deel,

And knew ful weel the moonés mansioun
Acordaunt to his operacioun ; 1290
And knew also his othere observaunces,
For swiche illusiouns and swiche mes-
chaunces

As hethen folk useden in thilké dayes ;
For which no lenger makéd he delayes ;
But thurgh his magik for a wyke or tweye
It semed that alle the rokkés were awaye.

Aurelius, which that yet despaired is
Wher he shal han his love or fare amys,
Awaiteth nyght and day on this myracle ;
And whan he knew that ther was noon
obstácle, 1300

That voyded were thise rokkés everychon,
Doun to his maistrés feet he fil anon,
And seyde, ' I, woful, wrecche Aurelius,
Thanké yow, lord, and lady myn, Venus,
That me han holpen fro my carés colde ' ;
And to the temple his wey forth hath he
holde,

Where as he knew he sholde his lady see ;
And whan he saugh his tyme anon right hee,
With dredful herte and with ful humble
cheere, 1309

Salewed hath his sovereyn lady deere.

' My righté lady,' quod this woful man,
' Whom I mooste drede, and love as I
best kan,

And lothest were of al this world displese,
Nere it that I for yow have swich disese
That I moste dyen heereat youre foot anon ;
Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon,
But certés, outhere moste I dye or pleyne.
Ye sle me giltélees for verray peyne,
But of my deeth thogh that ye have no
routhe,

Avyseth yow, er that ye breke youre
trouthe. 1320

Repenteth yow, for thilké God above,
Er ye me sleen by-cause that I yow love,
For, madame, wel ye woot what ye han
hight,—

Nat that I chalange anythyng of right,
Of yow, my sovereyn lady, but youre
grace,—

But in a gardyn yond, at swich a place,
Ye woot right wel what ye bihighten me,
And in myn hand youre trouthe plighen ye
To love me best,—God woot ye seyde so,
Al be that I unworthy be therto. 1330

Madame, I speke it for the honour of yow,
Moore than to save myn hertës lyfright now,
I have do so as ye comanded me,
And, if ye vouchesauf, ye may go see.

Dooth as yow list, have youre biheste in
mynde,

For, quyk or deed, right there ye shal me
fynde.

In yow lith al to do me lyve or deye,—
But wel I woot the rokkës been aweye.’

He taketh his leve and she astonied
stood ;

In al hir facë nas a drope of blood, 1340
She wendë never han come in swich a
trappe !

‘Allas !’ quod she, ‘that ever this sholde
happe,

For wende I never by possibilitee,
That swich a monstre or merveille myghte
be ;

It is agayns the proces of nature.’
And hoom she goth a sorweful creature,—

For verray feere unnethë may she go.
She wepeth, wailleth al a day or two,
And swowneth, that it routhë was to see ;
But why it was to no wight toldë shee, 1350

For out of towne was goon Arveragus.
But to herself she spak, and seyde thus,
With facë pale and with ful sorweful cheer,
In hire compleynt as ye shal after heere.

‘Allas !’ quod she, ‘on thee, Fortune,
I pleyne,

That unwar wrappëd hast me in thy cheyne,
For which tescapë woot I no socour,
Save oonly deeth or ellës dishonour.

Oon of these two bihoveth me to chese,
But nathelees yet have I levere lese 1360
My lif, than of my body have a shame,
Or knowe myselfen fals, or lese my name ;

1355. As noted in F, the stories referred to in
this wearisome complaint are all taken from St.
Jerome’s treatise, *Contra Jovinianum* (ch. 41.
§ 306 sqq. in Migne).

And with my deth I may be quyt, y-wis ;
I hath ther nat many a noble wyf er this,
And many a mayde, y-slayn hir self, allas !
Rather than with hir body doon trespas ?

‘Yis, certës, lo, thise stories beren
witness

Whan Thretty Tirauntz ful of cursednesse
Haddeslayn Phidoun, in Atthenës, at feste,
They comanded his doghtres for tareste,
And bryngen hem biforn hem in despit,
Al naked, to fulfille hir foul delit ;

And in hir fadrës blood they made hem
daunce

Upon the pavement,—God yeve hem mys-
chaunce !

For which thise woful maydens, ful of drede,
Rather than they wolde lese hir mayden-
hede

They prively been stirt into a welle,
And dreynthe hemselven, as the bookës telle.

‘They of Mecenë leete enquere and seke,
Of Lacedomyc, fifty maydens eke, 1380
On whichë they wolden doon hir lecherye,
But was ther noon of al that compaignye
That shenasslayn, and with a good entente
Chees rather for to dyc, than assente
To been oppressed of hir maydenhede.

Why sholde I thanne to dyc been in drede ?

‘Lo, eek the tiraunt Aristoclides,
That loved a mayden heet Stymphalides,
Whan that hir fader slayn was on a nyght,
Unto Dianës temple goth she right, 1390
And hente the ymage in hir handës two,
Fro which ymagë wolde she never go :
No wight ne myghte hir handes of it arace
Til she was slayn, right in the selvë place.

‘Now sith that maydens hadden swich
despit

To been defoulde with mannës foul delit,
Wel oghte a wyf rather herselven slee
Than be defoulde, as it thyneketh me.

‘What shal I seyn of Hasdrubalës wyf
That at Cartage biraste herself hir lyf? 1400
For whan she saugh that Romayns wan the
toun,

She took hir children alle, and skipte adour
Into the fyr, and chees rather to dye
Than any Romayn dide hire vyleynye.

1379. *Mecene*, Messenia.

1387. *Aristoclides*, tyrant of Orchomenus.

'Hath nat Lucesse y-slayn himself, alas !
At Romé, whan [that] she oppresséd was
Of Tarquyn ? for hire thoughte it was a
shame

To lyven whan she haddé loste hir name.

'The sevene maydens of Melesie, also,
Han slayn himself for verray drede and wo,
Rather than folk of Gawle hem sholde
oppressé,—

Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,
Koude I now telle as touchyng this
mateere.

'Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf
so deere

Hirselven slow, and leet hir blood to glyde
In Habradates woundés depe and wyde,
And seyde, "My body, at the lceste way,
Ther shal no wight defoulen, if I may."

'What sholde I mo ensamples heer-of
sayn ?

Sith that so manye han hemselven slayn ¹⁴²⁰
Wel rather than they wolde defouléd be,
I wol conclude that it is bet for me
To sleen myself than been defouléd thus.

I wol be trewe unto Arveragus,
Or rather sleen myself in some manere,
As dide Democionés doghter deere
By-cause that she wolde nat defouléd be.

O Cedasus, it is ful greet pitee
To reden how thy doghtren deyde, alas !
That slowe herself for swich a manere
cas. ¹⁴³⁰

As greet a pitee was it, or wel moore,
The Theban mayden that for Nichanore
Hirselven slow, right for swich manere wo.
Another Theban mayden dide right so.
Foroon of Macilonye hadde hire oppressed
She with hir deeth hir maydenhede re-
dressed.

What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,
That for swich cas biraste himself hir lyf?
How trewe eek was to Alcebiades

^{1409.} *Melesie*, Milesia.

^{1414.} *Habradate*. See Xenophon, *Cyropedia*, lib. vii., for the story of Abradates and Panthea.

^{1426.} *Democionus doghter*. On the death of her betrothed, Leosthenes, she killed herself rather than take another as husband.

^{1432.} *Nichanore*, refused by the Theban maiden because he was her conqueror.

^{1437.} *Nicerates wyf*, at the time of the Thirty Tyrants.

His love, that rather for to dyen chees ¹⁴⁴⁰
Than for to suffre his body unburyed be?
Lo, which a wyf was Alceste, quod she.

'What seith Omer of goode Penalopee?
Al Grecé knoweth of hire chastitee.

Pardee, of Laodomya is writen thus,
That whan at Troie was slayn Protheselaus,
No lenger wolde she lyve after his day.

The same of noble Porcia telle I maye;
Withouté Brutus koudé she nat lyve,
To whom she hadde al hool hir herté yive.

The parfit wyfhod of Arthemessie ¹⁴⁵¹
Honuréd is thurgh al the Barbarie.

O Tenta, queene, thy wyfly chastitee

To allé wyvès may a mirour bee.

The samé thyng I seye of Bilyea,

Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria.'

Thus pleynéd Dorigene a day or tweye,
Purposyng ever that she woldé deye;
But nathélees upon the thriddé nyght ¹⁴⁵⁹
Hoom cam Arveragus, this worthy knyght,
And askéd hire why that she weepesosoore,
And she gan wepen ever lenger the moore.

'Allas !' quod she, 'that ever I was
born !

Thus have I seyd,' quod she, 'thus have
I sworn,—

And toold hym al, as ye han herd bifore,
It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore.

This housbonde, with glad chiere, in
freendly wyse,

Answerde and seyde as I shal yow devyse,
'Is ther oght ellés, Dorigen, but this?'

'Nay, nay,' quod she, 'God helpe me
so as wys !' ¹⁴⁷⁰

This is to muche, and it were Goddés wille.'

'Ye, wyf,' quod he, 'lat sleepen that
is stille,

It may be wel, paráventure, yet to day;
Ye shul youre trouthé holden, by my fay !
For God so wisly have mercy upon me,
I hadde wel levere y-stikéd for to be,
For verray love which that I to yow have,
But if ye sholde youre trouthé kepe and
save !

^{1451.} *Arthemessie*, of Caria, wife of Mausolus, whose tomb she built.

^{1453.} *Tenta*, Queen of Illyria.

^{1454, 1455.} Bilia was the wife of Duilius, consul 260 B.C.; Rhodogone, daughter of Darius, killed her nurse for suggesting a second marriage.

Trouthe is the hyeste thyng that man may
kepe,'— 1479

But with that word he brast anon to wepe,
And seyde, 'I yow forbede, up peyne of
deeth,

That never whil thee lasteth lyf ne breeth,
To no wight telle thou of this aventure,—
As I may best I wol my wo endure,—
Ne make no contenance of hevynesse
That folk of yow may demen harm or gesse.'

And forth he cleped a squier and a mayde;
'Gooth forth, anon, with Dorigen,' he
sayde,

'And bryngeth hire to swich a place, anon.'
They take hir leve and on hir wey they gon,
But they ne wiste why she thider wente:
He noldé no wight tellen his entente.

Paraventure an heepe of yow, y-wis,
Wol holden hym a lewéd man in this,
That he wol putte his wyf in jupartie.
Herkeneth the tale, er ye upon hire crie;
She may have bettré fortune than yow
semeth;

And, whan that ye han herd the talé,
demeth.

This squier, which that highte Aurelius,
On Dorigen that was so amorus, 1500
Of aventure happed hire to meete
Amydde the toun, right in the quykkeste
strete,

Asshe was bown to goon the wey forth right
Toward the gardyn, ther as she had hight;
And he was to the gardynward also;
For wel he spyed whan she woldé go
Out of hir hous to any maner place;
But thus they mette, of aventure or grace,
And he saweth hire with glad entente,
And asked of hire whiderward she wente;
And she answered, half as she were mad,
'Unto the gardyn, as myn housbonde bad,
My trouthe for to holde, alas!'

Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,
And in his herte hadde greet compassioun
Of hire and of hire lamentacioun,
And of Arveragus, the worthy knyght,
That bad hire holden al that she had hight,
So looth hym was his wyf sholde breke hir
trouthe;

1481. *of*, om. E.
1503. *brun*, ready.

And in his herte he caughte of this greet
routhe, 1520

Considerynge the beste on every syde,
That fro his lust yet were hym levere abyde,
Than doon so heigh a cherlyssh wrecched-
nesse

Agayns franchise and allé gentillesse;
For which in fewé wordès seyde he thus:
'Madame, seyeth to youre lord, Arver-
agus,

That sith I se his grete gentillesse;
To yow, and eek I se wel youre distresse,
That him were levere han shame,—and
that were routhe,—

Than ye to me sholde breké thus youre
trouthe, 1530

I have wel levere ever to suffre wo,
Than I departe the love bitwix yow two.
I yow relese, madame, into youre hond,
Quyt every surément and every bond
That ye han maad to me as heer biforn,
Sith thilké tymé which that ye were born.
My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never
repreve

Of no biheste, and heere I take my leve,
As of the treweste and the besté wyf,
That ever yet I knew in al my lyf. 1540
But every wyf be war of hire biheeste;
On Dorigene remembreth, atté leeste.
Thus kan a squier doon a gentil dede
As wel as kan a knyght, withouten drede.'

She thonketh hym upon hir knees al
bare,

And hoom unto hir housbonde is she fare,
And tolde hym al, as ye han herd me sayd;
And be ye siker he was so weel apayd
That it were impossible me to wryte.
What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte?

Arveragus and Dorigene his wyf 1551
In sovereyn blisse leden forth hir lyf;
Never eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene.
He cherisseth hire, as though she were a
queene,

And she was to hym trewe for evermoore.
Of thisé folk ye gete of me namoore.

Aurelius, that his cost hath all forlorn,
Curseth the tyme that ever he was born.
'Allas!' quod he, 'allas, that I bihighte
Of puré gold a thousand pound of wighte
Unto this philosopre! How shal I do?

I se namoore but that I am fordo ;
 Myn heritagē moot I nedēs selle,
 And been a beggere ; hecre may I nat dwelle
 And shamen al my kynrede in this place,
 But I of hym may getē better grace ;
 But nathēlces I wole of hym assaye
 At certeyn dayēs, yeer by yeer, to paye,
 And thanke hym of his gretē curteisye.
 Mytrouthē wol I kepe, I wol nat lye.' 1570

With hertē soor he gooth unto his cofre,
 And broghtē gold unto this philosophre,
 The value of fyve hundred pound, I gesse,
 And hym bisecheth, of his gentillesse,
 To graunte hym dayēs of the remenaunt,
 And seydē, 'Maister, I dar wel make avaunt
 I faillēd never of my trouthe as yit,
 For sikerly my dettē shal be quyrt
 Towardēs yow, however that I fare
 To goon a-begged in my kirtle bare ; 1580
 But wolde ye vouchēsauf, upon seuretee,
 Two yeer, or thre, for to respiten me,
 Thanne were I wel, for ellēs moot I selle
 Myn heritagē ; ther is namoore to telle.'

This philosophre sobrelly answerde,
 And seydē thus, whan he thise wordēs
 herde :

'Have I nat holdē covenant unto thee ?'
 'Yes, certēs, wel and trewely,' quod he.
 'Hastow nat had thy lady as thee liketh ?'
 'No, no,' quod he, and sorwefully he siketh.
 'What was the causē ; tel me if thou kan.'
 Aurelius his tale anon bigan,
 And tolde hym al, as ye han herd bifoore ;
 It nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore.

He seide, 'Arveragus, of gentillesse,
 Hadde levere dye in sorwe and in distresse,

Than that his wyf were of hir trouthē fals' ;
 The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde hym als, —
 How looth hire was to been a wikked wyf,
 And that she levere had lost that day hir lyf,
 And that hir trouthe she swoor thurgh
 innocence, 1601

She never erst herd speke of apparence ;
 'That made me han of hire so greet pitee,
 And right as frely as he sente hire me,
 As frely sente I hire to hym ageyn ;
 This is al and som, ther is namoore to seyn.'

This philosophre answerde, 'Leevē
 brother,

Everich of yow dide gentilly til other ;
 Thou art a squier, and he is a knyght,
 But God forbedē, for his blisful nyght, 1610
 But if a clerk koude doon a gentil dede,
 As wel as any of yow, it is no drede.

'Sire, I relecessē thee thy thousand pound
 As thou right now were copen out of the
 ground,

Ne never er now ne haddest knowen me ;
 For, sire, I wol nat taken a peny of thee
 For al my craft, ne noght for my travaille.
 Thou hast y-payēd wel for my vitaille.
 It is ynogh, and farewel, have good day !'
 And took his hors, and forth he goth his way.

Lordynges, this questioun wolde I askē
 now, 1621

Which was the moostē fre, as thynketh
 yow ?

Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende.
 I kan namoore, my tale is at an ende.

1621. For this questioun thanne. Possibly the
 word to be omitted is 'questionn.'

GROUP G

SECOND NUN'S TALE

The Prologue of the Seconde Nonnes Tale

THE ministre and the norice unto vice
 Which that men clepe in Englissh ydel-
 nesse,

Seconde Nonnes Tale, a translation, at first
 close, afterwards free, of the life of St. Cecilia in
 the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine.
 The stanzas on idleness were probably suggested
 by the Prologue of the French translator, Jehan

That porter at the gate is of delices,
 To eschue, and by hire contrarie hire
 oppresse, —

That is to seyn, by leveful bisynesse, —
 Wel oghten we to don al oure entente,
 Lest that the feend thurgh ydelnesse us
 hente,

de Vignay, but in the Tale Chaucer follows the
 Latin.

3. porter, as in the *Roman de la Rose*.

For he that with his thousand cordès slye
 Continuelly us waiteth to bi-clappe, 9
 When he may man in ydelnesse espye,
 Hekanso lightly cacche hym in his trappe,
 Til that a man be hent right by the lappe,
 He nys nat war the feend hath hym in
 honde :
 Wel oghte us werche, and ydelnesse
 withstonde.

And though men dradden never for to dye,
 Yet seen men wel by resoun, doutélees,
 That ydelnesse is roten slogardye,
 Of which ther never comth no good
 encrees ;

And seen that slouthe hir holdeth in a lecs
 Oonly to slepe and for to ete and drynke,
 And to devouren al that othere swynk. 21

And for to putte us fro swich ydelnesse,
 That cause is of so greet confusioun,
 I have heer doon my feithful bisynesse,
 After the Legende, in translacioun,
 Right of thy glorious lif and passioun,
 Thou with thy gerland wroght with rose
 and lilie,—

Thee, meene I, mayde and martir, seint
 Cecilie.

Invocacio ad Marian

And thow that flour of virginès art alle,
 Of whom that Bernard list so wel to write ;
 To thee, at my bigynnyng, first I call, 31
 Thou confort of us wrecches, do me endite
 Thy maydens deeth, that wan thurgh
 hire merite,

The eternal lyf, and of the feend victorie
 As man may after reden in hire storie.

Thow mayde and mooder, doghter of
 thy sone,

Thow weile of mercy, synful soulès cure,
 In whom that God, for bountee, chees to
 wone,

Thow humble, and heigh over every
 creature, 39

36-56. These three stanzas are partly a translation of some of the first twenty-one lines of Dante's *Paradiso*, Cant. 33, or perhaps of some Latin prayer or hymn which Dante may have imitated.

Thow nobledest so ferforth oure nature,
 That nodede yn the Maker hadde of kynde
 His sone in blood and flessch to clothe
 and wynde.

Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy sydis
 Took mannès shape the eterneel Love
 and Pees,

That of the trynè compas lord and gyde is,
 Whom erthe, and see, and hevene, out
 of relees,

Ay heryen ; and thou virgine wemmélees
 Baar of thy body, and dweltest mayden
 pure,

The creatour of every creature.

Assembled is in thee magnificence, 50
 With mercy, goodnesse, and with swich
 pitee,

That thou, that art the sonne of excellence,
 Nat oonly helpest hem that preyen thee,
 But often tyme, of thy benygnytee,
 Ful frely, er that men thyn help biseche,
 Thou goost biforn and art hir lyvès leche.

Now help, thow mecke and blisful fairè
 mayde,

Me fleméd wrecche in this desert of galle ;
 Thynk on the womman Cananee, that sayde
 That whelpes eten somme of the crommes
 alle 60

That from hir lordès table been y-falle,
 And though that I, unworthy sone of Eve,
 Be synful, yet acceptè my bileve.

And for that feith is deed withouten werkis,
 So, for to werken, yif me wit and space,
 That I be quit fro thennès that moost
 derk is.

O thou that art so fair and ful of grace,
 Be myn advocat in that heighè place,
 Theras withouten ende is songe Osanne,
 Thow Cristès mooder, doghter deere of
 Anne ! 70

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte,
 That troubled is by the contagioun

62. sone of Eve. The phrase (cp. l. 78, *reden that I write*) shows that this legend was not written as one of the Canterbury Tales.

Of my body, and also by the wighte
Of erthely lust and fals affecioun !
O havene of refut, O salvacioun
Of hem that been in sorwe and in distresse,
Now helpe, for to my werk I wol me dresse !

Yet preye I yow that reden that I write,
Foryeve me that I do no diligence
This ilk storie subtilly to endite, 80
For bothe have I the wordès and sentence
Of hym that at the seintès reverence
The storie wroot, and folwen hire legende ;
I pray yow that ye wole my werk amende.

Interpretacio nominis Cecilie

First wolde I yow the name of Seinte
Cecile

Expowne, as men may in hir storie see.
It is to seye in Englishsh 'hevenes lillie,'
For purè chaastnesse of virginitee,
Or for she whitenesse hadde of honestee,
And grene of conscience, and of good fame
The sootè savour, lillie was hir name ; 91

Or Cecile is to seye 'the wey to blynde,'
For she ensample was by good techynge ;
Or ellès Cecile, as I writen fynde,
Is joynèd by a manere conjoynynge
Of 'hevene' and 'lia,' and heere, in
figurynge,
The 'hevene' is set for thought of hoolynesse
And 'lia' for hire lastynge bisynesse.

Cecile may eek be seyð in this manere
'Wantynge of blyndnesse,' for hir gretè
light 100

Of sapience, and for hire thewès cleere ;
Or ellès, loo, this maydens namè bright
Of 'hevene' and 'leos' comth, for which
by right
Men myghte hire wel the hevene of peple
calle,
Ensampler of goode and wisè werkès alle.

For 'leos' 'peple' in Englishsh is to seye ;
And right as men may in the hevene see

87. *hevenes lillie*, 'cœli lillia.'

92. *the wey to blynde*, 'cæcis via.'

103. *leos*, Gk. λέως.

The sonne, and moone, and sterrès,
every weye,
Right so men goostly in this mayden free
Syen of feith the magnanymytee, 110
And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,
And sondry werkes brighte of excellence.

And right so as thise philosophres write
That hevene is swift, and round, and eek
brennynge,
Right so was fairè Cecilie the white,
Ful swift and bisy ever, in good werkynge ;
And round and hool in good persëverynge,
And brennynge ever in charite ful brighte :
Now have I yow declarèd what she highte.

*Here bigynneth The Seconde Nonnes Tale
of the lyf of Seinte Cecile*

This mayden bright, Cecile, as hir lif
seith, 120
Was comen of Romayns and of noble
kynde,
And from hir cradel up fostred in the feith
Of Crist, and bar his gospel in hir mynde.
She never cessèd, as I writen fynde,
Of hir preyere, and God to love and drede,
Bisekyng hym to kepe hir maydenhede.

And whan this mayden sholde unto a man
Y-wedded be, that was ful yong of age,
Which that y-clepèd was Valerian,
And day was comen of hir marriage, 130
She ful devout and humble in hire corage,
Under hir robe of gold that sat ful faire,
Haddè next hire flessch y-clad hire in an
haire ;

And whil the organs maden melodie,
To God allone in hertè thus sang she :
'O Lord, my soule and eek my body
gye
Unwemmèd, lest that I confounded be' ;
And for his love that dyde upon a tree,
Every secònde or thriddè day she faste
Ay biddynge in hire orisons ful faste. 140

The nyght cam, and to beddè mostè
she gon

With hire housbonde, asofte is the manere,
 And pryvely to hym she seyde anon,
 'O sweete and wel-bilovéd spouse deere,
 Ther is a conseil, and ye wolde it heere,
 Which that right fayn I wolde unto yow
 seye,
 So that ye swere ye shul it nat biwreye.'

Valerian gan faste unto hire swere
 That for no cas, ne thyng that myghte be,
 He sholdé never mo biwreien here; 150
 And thanne at erst to hym thus seyde she:
 'I have an aungel which that loveth me,
 That with greet love, wher so I wake or
 sleepe,
 Is redy ay my body for to kepe;

And if that he may feelen, out of drede,
 That ye me touche or love in vileynye,
 He right anon wol sle yow with the dede,
 And in youre yowthe thus ye sholden dye;
 And if that ye in clené love me gye,
 He wolyowloven as me for youre clennesses,
 And shewen yow his joye and his
 brightnesse.' 161

Valerian, corrected as God wolde,
 Answerde agayn, 'If I shal trusten thee
 Lat me that aungel se, and hym biholde,
 And if that it a verray angel bec,
 Thanne wol I doonasthou hast prayéd me;
 And if thou love another man, for sothe,
 Right with this swerd thanne wol I sle
 yow bothe!'

Cecile answerde anon right in this wise:
 'If that yow list, the angel shul ye see,
 So that ye trowe in Crist, and yow baptize.
 Gooth forth to *Via Apia*, quod shee,
 'Thatfro this toun nistant butmilés three,
 And to the pouré folkés that ther dwelle
 Seyhem right thus as that I shal yowtelle.

'Tell hem that I, Cecile, yow to hem
 sente

142. *as ofte is the manere*, Chaucer's tag. Cp. *and ye wolde it heere*, l. 145; *wher so I wake or sleepe*, l. 153, and many more.

172. *Via Apia*. Chaucer seems to take this as the name of a place. The Latin says 'the third milestone on the Appian road.'

To shewen yow the goode Urban the olde,
 For secree needés, and for good entente;
 And whan that ye Seint Urban han biholde,
 Telle hym the wordés whiche that I yow
 tolde, 180
 And whan that he hath purgéd yow fro
 synne,
 Thanne shul ye see that angel, er ye
 twynne.'

Valerian is to the place y-gon,
 And right as hym was taught by his
 lernynge,
 He foond this hooly olde Urban anon,
 Among the seintés buryeles lotynge;
 And he anon, withouten tarynge,
 Dide his messáge; and whan that he it
 tolde,
 Urban for joye his handés gan up holde;

The teeris from his eyen leet he falle. 190
 'Almyghty Lord! O Jhesu Crist,'
 quod he,
 'Sower of chast conseil, hierde of us alle,
 The fruyt of thilké seed of chastitee
 That thou hast sowe in Cecile, taak to thee!
 Lo, lyk a bisy bee, withouten gile,
 Thee serveth ay thyn owene thral Cecile;

For thilké spouse that she took right now,
 Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth heere
 As meke as ever was any lamb, to yow':
 And with that word anon ther gan appere
 An oold man, clad in whité clothés cleere,
 That hadde a book with lettre of gold,
 in honde,
 And gan bfore Valerian to stonde.

Valerian, as deed, fil doun for drede
 Whan he hym saugh, and he up hente
 hym tho,
 And on his book right thus he gan to rede:
 'O Lord, o feith, o God, withouten mo;
 O Cristendom, and Fader of alle also,
 Aboven alle, and over alle, everywhere';
 Thise wordés al with gold y-written were.

195. *bisy bee*, Latin: 'apis argumentosa,' a delightful phrase for Cecilia.

208. *O Cristendom*, Latin: 'unum baptisma.'

Whan this was rad, thanne seyde this
oldè man, 211

'Leevestow this thyng; or no? Sey ye
or nay.'

'I leeve al this thyng,' quod Valerian,
'For oother thyng than this, I dar welsay,
Under the hevene no wight thynké may.'
Tho vanysshed this olde man, he nystè
where,

And Pope Urban hym cristned right there.

Valerian gooth hoom and fynt Cecile
Withinne his chambre with an angel
stonde.

This angel hadde of roses and of lillie 220
Córones two, the which he bar in honde;
And first to Cecile, as I understonde,
He yaf that oon, and after gan he take
That oother to Valerian, hir make.

'With body clene, and with unwemmed
thoght,

Kepeth ay wel thise córones,' quod he;
'Fro paradyse to yow have I hem brought,
Ne never mo ne shal they roten bee,
Ne lese hir sootè savour, trusteth me;
Ne never wight shal seen hem with hiseye,
But he be chaast and hatè vileynye; 231

And thow, Valerian, for thow so soone
Assentedest to good conseil also,
Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han
thy boone.'

'I have a brother,' quod Valerian tho,
'That in this world I lovè no man so;
I pray yow that my brother may han grace
Toknowe the trouthe, as I do in this place.'

The angel seyde, 'God liketh thy requeste,
And bothè with the palm of martirdom
Ye shullen come unto his blissful feste';
And with that word Tiburce his brother
com,

And whan that he the savour undernom
Which that the roses and the lilies caste,
Withinne his herte he gan to wondre faste;

Andseyde, 'I wondre, this tyme of the year,
Whennès that sootè savour cometh so

241. *unto his blissful feste*, 'ad Dominum.'

Of rose and lilies that I smellè heer;
For though I hadde hem in myne handès
two 249

The savour myghte in me no depper go;
The sweetè smel that in myn herte I fynde
Hath chaungéd me al in another kynde.'

Valerian seyde, 'Two córones han we,
Snow white and rosè reed, that shynen
cleere,

Whiche that thyne eyen han no myght
to see;

And as thou smellèst hem thurgh my
preyere,

So shaltow seen hem, leevè brother deere,
If it so be thou wolt, withouten slouthe,
Bileve aright and knowen verray trouthe.'

Tiburce answerdè, 'Seistow this to me
In soothnesse, or in drem I herknè this?'

'In dremès,' quod Valerian, 'han we be
Unto this tyme, brother myn, y-wis;
But now at erst in trouthe ourdwelllyng is.'
'How woostow this,' quod Tiburce, 'in
what wyse?'

Quod Valerian, 'That shal I thee devyse.

The aungel of God hath me the trouthe
y-taught,

Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wolt
reneye

The ydoles, and beclene, and ellès naught.'
(And of the myracle of thise córones tweye,
Seint Ambrose in his preface list to seye,—
Solempnely this noble doctour deere
Commendeth it, and seith in this manere:

'The palm of martirdom for to receyve
Seintè Cecile, fulfild of Goddès yifte,
The world and eek hire chambre gan she
weyve;

Witnesse Tyburcès and Valerians shrifte,
To which God of his bountee woldè shifte
Córones two of floures wel smellynge,
And made his angel hem the córones
brynge; 280

The mayde hath broght thise men to
blisse above;

251. 'Ita sum refectus.'

The world hath wist what it is worth
 certeyn,
 Devocioun of chastitee to love.)
 Thoshewed hym Cecile, alopenand pley,
 That alle ydoles nys but a thyng in veyn;
 For they been dombe and therto they
 been deve,
 And chargéd hym his ydoles for to leve.

Who so that troweth nat this, a beest
 he is,
 Quod tho Tiburce, 'if that I shal nat lye,'
 And shegan kisse his brest that herdè this,
 And was ful glad he koudè trouthe espye.
 'This day I takè thee for myn allye,'
 Seydè this blissful, fairè maydè, deere,
 And after that she seyde as ye may heere :
 'Lo, right soas the love of Crist,' quod she,
 'Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in
 that wise
 Anon for myn allye heer take I thee,
 Syn that thou wolt thyne ydolès despise;
 Go with thy brother now, and thee baptise,
 And make thee clene so that thou mowe
 biholde
 The angeles face, of which thy brother
 tolde.'

Tiburce answerde and seyde, 'Brother
 dere,
 First tell me whider I shal, and to what
 man?'
 'To whom?' quod he; 'com forth with
 right good cheere;
 I wol thee lede unto the Pope Urban.'
 'Til Urban, brother myn Valerian?'
 Quod tho Tiburce; 'woltow me thider
 lede?
 Me thyneketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menestow nat Urban,' quod he tho,
 'That is so oftè dampnéd to be deed, ³¹⁰
 And woneth in halkes alwey to and fro,
 And dar nat onés puttè forth his heed?
 Men sholde hym brennen in a fyr so reed,
 If he were founde, or that men myghte
 hym spye,
 And we also to bere hym compaignye;

292. 'Hodie te fateor meum esse cognatum,' I
 own you are really of my kin.

And whil we seken thilke divinitee,
 That is y-hid in hevene prývly,
 Algate y-brend in this world shul we be!'
 To whom Cecile answerdè boldely,
 'Men myghten dreden wel and skilfully
 This lyf tolese, myne owene deerè brother,
 If this were lyvyng oonly, and noon
 oother;

But ther is bettre lif in oother place,
 That never shal be lost, ne drede thee
 noght,
 Which Goddès sone us toldè thurgh his
 grace;
 That Fadrèssone hath allè thyngy-wroght,
 And al that wroght is with a skilful thought
 The Goost, that fro the Fader gan procede,
 Hath sowled hem, withouten any drede.

By word and by myracle, Goddès sone,
 Whan he was in this world, declarèd heere
 That ther was oother lyf ther men may
 wone.'
 To whom answerde Tiburce, 'O suster
 deere,
 Ne seydestow right now in this manere,
 "Ther nys but o God, lord in soothfast-
 nesse,"—
 And now of three how maystow bere
 wittnesse?'

'That shal I tellè,' quod she, 'ere I go.
 Right as a man hath sapiences thre,
 Memorie, engyn, and intellect also,
 So in o beyng of divinitee ³⁴⁰
 Thrè persónes may ther right wel bee';
 Tho gan she hym ful bisely to preche
 Of Cristès come, and of his peynès teche;

And many pointès of his passioun,
 How Goddès sone in this world was
 withholde
 To doon mankyndè playn remissioun,
 That was y-bounde in synne and carès
 colde;
 Al this thyng she unto Tiburce tolde,

322. 'Si hæc sola esset vita.'

346. Hitherto Chaucer has translated literally,
 only eking out his stanzas with tags; he now
 begins to abridge, at the same time adding stanzas
 of his own.

And after this Tiburce in good entente
With Valerian to Pope Urban he wente,

That thanked God, and with glade herte
and light, ³⁵¹

He cristned hym, and made hym in that
place

Parfit in his lernynge, Goddès knyght ;
And after this Tiburcè gat swich grace
That every day he saugh in tyme and space
The aungel of God, and every maner boone
That he God axèd, it was sped ful soone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn
How manye wondres Jhesus for hem
wroghte ; ³⁵⁹

But attè laste, to tellen short and pleyn,
The sergeantz of the toun of Rome hem
soghte,

And hem biforn Almache, the Prefect,
broghte,

Which hem apposed, and knew al hire
entente,

And to the ymage of Juppiter hem sente ;

And seyde, 'Whoso wol nat sacrifice,
Swape of his heed ; this my sentence heer !'
Anon this martirs that I yow devyse,
Oon Maximus, that was an officer
Of the Prefectes, and his corniculer,
Hem hente, and whan he forth the
seintès ladde, ³⁷⁰

Hymself he weepe for pitee that he hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintès
loore,

He gat hym of the tormentours leve,
And ladde hem to his hous, withoute moore,
And with hir prechyng, er that it were eve,
They gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone,
The falsè feith, to trowe in God allone.

Cecilè cam, whan it was woxen nyght,
With preestès, that hem cristned all y-feere ;
And afterward, whan day was woxen light,
Cecile hem seyde with a ful stedefast cheere,

^{360. attè laste.} The offence alleged in the
Legend is the burial of the bodies of martyrs.

'Now, Cristès owene knyghtès, leeve,
and deere,

Cast alle away the werkès of derknesse,
And armeth yow in armure of brightnesse.

Ye han, for sothe, y-doon a greet bataille,
Youre cours is doon, youre feith han ye
conserved.

Gooth to the corone of lyf, that may nat
faillè ;

The rightful Jugè, which that ye han served,
Shal yeve it yow, as ye han it deserved ;
And whan this thing was seyde as I devyse,
Men ledde hem forth to doon the sacrifice.

But whan they weren to the place
y-broght, —

To tellen shortly the conclusioun, —
They nolde encense ne sacrifice right noght,
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun
With humble herte and sad devocioun,
And losten bothe hir hevedes in the place ;
Hir soulès wenten to the kyng of grace.

This Maximus, that saugh this thyng
bityde, ⁴⁰⁰

With pitous teeris tolde it anon right,
That he hir soulès saugh to hevene glyde,
With aungelsful of cleernesse and of light ;
And with his word converted many a wight,
For which Almachius dide hym so to-bete,
With whippe of leed, til he his lif gan lete.

Cecile hym took, and buried hym anon
By Tiburce and Valerian softely
Withinne hire buryng-place under the
ston ;

And after this Almachius hastily ⁴¹⁰
Bad his ministres fecchen openly
Cecile, so that she myghte in his presence
Doon sacrifice, and Juppiter encense ;

But they, converted at hir wisè loore,
Wepten ful soore, and yaven ful credence
Unto hire word, and cryden moore and
moore,

'Crist, Goddès sone, withouten difference
Is verray God, this is al oure sentence,

^{409.} Added.

That hath so good a servant hym to serve ;
This with o voys we trowen, thogh we
sterve !' 420

Almachius that herde of this doynge
Bad fecchen Cecile that hemyghte hire see ;
And alderfirst, lo this was his axynge,
'What maner womman artow?' tho
quod he.

'I am a gentil womman born,' quod she.
'I axè thee,' quod he, 'though it thee
greeve,
Of thy religioun, and of thy bileeve.'

'Ye han bigonne youre question folily,'
Quod she, 'that wolden two answers
conclude

In o demande ; ye axèd lewedly.' 430
Almache answerde unto that similitude,
'Of whennès comth thyn answering so
rude ?'

'Of whennès?' quod she, whan that
she was freyned ;

'Of conscience, and of good feith
unfeyned.'

Almachius seyde, 'Ne takestow noon
heede

Of my power?' And she answerde hym
this :

'Your myght,' quod she, 'ful litel is to
dreede,

For every mortal mannès power nys
But lyke a bladdre, ful of wynd, y-wys ;
For with a nedles poynt whan it is blowe
May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe.'

'Ful wrongfully bigonnè thou,' quod he,
'And yet in wrong is thy persèveraunce ;
Wostow nat how our myghty princes free
Han thus comanded and maad ordinaunce,
That every Cristen wight shal han
penaunce,

But if that he his Cristendom withseye ;
And goon al quit, if he wole it reneye ?'

'Yowre princes erren, as youre nobleye
dooth,' 440

Quod tho Cecile, 'and with a wood sentence
Ye make us gilty, and it is nat sooth ;

For ye that knowen wel oure innocence,—
For as muche as we doon a reverence
To Crist, and for we berea Cristen name,—
Ye putte on us a cryme, and eek a blame ;

But we, that knowen thilkè namè so
For vertuous, we may it not withseye.'
Almache answerde, 'Chees oon of thisè
two,—

Do sacrifice, or Cristendom reneye, 459
That thou mowe now escapen by that weye.'
At which the hooly blisful fairè mayde
Gan for to laughe, and to the jugè sayde,

'O jugè, confus in thy nycètee !
Woltow that I reneyè innocence,
To makè me a wikked wight?' quod she.
Lo, he dissymuleth heere in audience,
He stareth, and woodeth in his adver-
tence.

To whom Almachius, 'Unselywrecche !
Ne woostow nat how far my myght may
strecche ?

Han noght oure myghty princes to me
yeven, 470

Ye, bothè power and auctoritee
To maken folk to dyen or to lyven ?
Whyspekestow so proudly thanne to me ?'
'Ispekè noght but stedfastly,' quod she,
'Nat proudly, for, I speke as for my syde,
We haten deedly thilkè vice of pryde ;

And if thou dredè nat a sooth to heere,
Thanne wol I shewe al openly by right
That thou hast maad a fulgret lesyng heere.
Thou seyst thy princes han thee yeven
myght 480

Bothe for to sleen and for to quyken a wight ;
Thou that ne mayst but oonly lyf bireve,
Thou hast noon oother power, ne no leve :

But thou mayst seyn thy princes han
thee maked

Ministre of deeth, for if thou speke of mo,
Thou lyeest, for thy power is ful naked !'
'Do wey thy booldnesse !' seyde Alma-
chius tho,

'And sacrifie to oure goddès er thou go !

I recchè nat what wrong that thou me
profre,
For I can suffre it as a philosophre, 490

But thilkè wrongès may I nat endure,
That thou spekest of oure goddès heere,
quod he.

Cecile answerde, 'O nycè creature !
Thou seydest no word syn thou spak to me
That I ne knew therwith thy nycètee,
And that thou were in every maner wise
A lewèd officer and a veyn justise !

Ther lakketh no thyng to thyne outter eyen
That thou nart blynd, for thyng that we
seen alle

That it is stoon,—that men may wel
espyen,— 500
That ilkè stoon a god thow wolt it calle.
I rede thee, lat thyn hand upon it falle,
And taste it wel, and stoon thou shalt it
fynde,
Syn that thou seest nat with thyne eyen
blynde.

It is a shamè that the peple shal
So scornè thee, and laughe at thy folye ;
For comunly men woot it wel overal
That myghty God is in his hevenès hye,
And thise ymáges, wel thou mayst espye,
To thee, ne to hémself, mowen noght
profite, 510
For in effect they been nat worth a myte.'

Thise wordès and swiche other seyde she ;
And he weex wrooth, and bad men
sholde hir lede
Hom til hir house, and 'In hir hous,'
quod he,
'Brenne hire right in a bath of flambes
rede' ;
And as he bad, right so was doon in dede,
For in a bath they gonne hire fastè shetten,
And nyght and day greet fyre they under
betten.

The longè nyght, and eek a day also,
For al the fyr, and eek the bathès heete,

489-497. Chaucer's addition.
505-511. Added.

She sat al coold and felte of it no wo ;
It made hire nat a dropè for to sweete ;
But in that bath hir lyf she mostè lete,
For he, Almachius, with ful wikke entente
To sleen hire in the bath his sondè sente.

Thre strokès in the nekke he smoot hire
tho,
The tormentour, but for no maner chaunce
He myghte noght smyt al hir nekke atwo ;
And for ther was that tyme an ordinaunce,
That no man sholde doon men swich
penaunce 530
The ferthe strook to smyten, softe or soore,
This tormentour ne dorstè do namoore ;

But half deed, with hir nekke y-corven
there,
He leste hir lye, and on his wey is went.
The Cristen folk which that aboute hire
were,
With sheetès han the blood ful faire y-hent.
Thre dayès lyvèd she in this torment,
And never cessèd hem the feith to teche
That she hadde fostred ; hem she gan to
preche ; 539

And hem she yaf hir moebles, and hir thyng,
And to the Pope Urban bitook hem tho,
And seyde, 'I axèd this at hevene kyng,
To han respit thre dayès and namo,
To recomende to yow, er that I go,
Thise souls, lo, and that I myghte do
werche
Heere of myn hous perpetuelly a cherche.'

Seint Urban, with his deknès, prively
The body fette, and buryed it by nyghte
Among his other seintès honestly.
Hir hous the chirche of Sainte Cecilie
highte ; 550
Seint Urban halwèd it, as he wel myghte,
In which, into this day, in noble wyse,
Mendoon to Crist and to his seintes servyse.

*The prologe of the Chansons Yemannes
Tale*

Whan toold was al the lyf of Sainte
Cecile,

535, 536. Added.

Er we hadde riden fully fyvè mile,
At Boghton-under-Blee, us gan atake
A man that clothèd was in clothès blake,
And undernethe he had a white surplys;
His hackeney, which that was al pomely
grys,

So swattè that it wonder was to see; 560
It semed as he had priked milès three.
The hors eek that his Yeman rood upon
So swattè that unnethè myghte it gon;
Aboute the peytrel stood the foom ful hye,
He was of foom al flekkèd as a pye.
A male tweyflood upon his croper lay,
It semèd that he caried lite array.
Al light for somer rood this worthy man,
And in myn hertè wondren I bigan
What that he was, til that I understood 570
How that his cloke was sowèd to his hood,
For which, whan I hadde long avysèd me,
I demèd hym som Chanoun for to be.
His hat heeng at his bak down by a laas,
For he hadde riden moore than trot or
paas;

He hadde ay priked lik as he were wood.
A clotè-leef he hadde under his hood
For swoot, and for to kepe his heed from
heete;

But it was joyè for to seen hym swete!
His forheed dropped as a stillatorie 580
Were ful of plantayne and of paritorie;
And whan that he was come hegan to crye,
'God save,' quod he, 'this joly compaignye!
Faste have I priked,' quod he, 'for youre
sake,

By-causè that I woldè yow atake
To riden in this myrie compaignye.'
His Yeman eek was ful of curteisye,
And seydc, 'Sires, now in the morwétyde,
Out of youre hostelrie I saugh you ryde,
And warnèd heer my lord, and my
soverayn, 590

Which that to ryden with yow is ful fayn,
For his desport; he loveth daliaunce.'

'Freend, for thy warnyng God yeve thee
good chaunce!'

'Thanne seyde oure Hoost, 'for certès it
wolde seme

Thylord were wys, and so I may weldeme;
He is ful jocunde also, dar I leye!
Can he oght telle a myrie tale or tweye,
With which he gladd may this com-
paignye?'

'Who, sire? mylord? ye, ye, withouten
leye! 599

He kan of murthe, and eek of jolitee
Nat but ynough; also, sire, trusteth me,
And ye hym knewè as wel as do I,
Ye woldè wondre how wel and craftily
He koudè werke, and that in sondry wise.
He hath take on hym many a greet emprise,
Which were ful hard for any that is heere
To brynge about, but they of hym it leere.
As hoonly as he rit amongès yow,
If ye hym kneweit wolde be for youre prow;
Ye woldè nat forgoon his áqueyntaunce
For muchel good, I dar leye in balaunce
Al that I have in my possessioun.
He is a man of heigh discrecioun;

I warne yow wel, he is a passyng man.'

'Wel,' quod oure Hoost, 'I pray thee
tel me than

Is he a clerk or noon? Telle what he is.'

'Nay, he is gretter than a clerk, y-wis,
Seydc this Yeman, 'and in wordès fewe,
Hoost, of his craft somewhat I wol yow
shewe. 619

'I seye, mylord kan swich subtilitee,—
But al his craft ye may nat wite at me,
And somewhat helpe I yet to his wirkyng,—
That al this ground on which we been
ridyng,

Til that we come to Caunterbury toun,
He koude al clenè turne it up-so-doun,
And pave it al of silver and of gold.'

And whan this Yeman hadde this tale
y-told

Unto oure Hoost, he seydc, '*Benedicitee!*
This thyng is wonder merveillous to me,
Syn that thy lord is of so heigh prudence,
By cause of which men sholde hym
reverence, 631

That of his worshiþe rekkeþ he so lite,
His overslopè nys nat worth a myte,

As in effect, to hym, so moot I go!

It is al baudi and to-tore also.

Why is thy lord so sluttish, I the preye,

603. *craftily*, H^o *thriftily*.

555. *fyve mile*, i.e. from Ospringe.

573. *som Chanoun*. The description accords with that of a 'black Augustinian.'

And is of power bettré clooth to beye,—
If that his dede accordé with thy speche ?
Tellé me that, and that I thee biseche.'

'Why?' quod this Yeman, 'wherto axe
ye me? 648

God help me so, for he shal never thee!—
But I wol nat avowé that I seye,
And therefore keepe it secree, I yow
preye,—

He is to wys, in feith, as I bileeve ;
That that is overdoon it wol nat preeve
Aright ; as clerkès seyn, it is a vice.
Wherefore in that I holde hym lewed and
nyce ;

For whan a man hath over-greet a wit,
Ful oft hym happeth to mysusen it.
So dooth my lord, and that me greveth
soore. 650

God it amende ! I kan sey yow namoore.'

'Ther-of no fors, good Yeman,' quod
oure Hoost,

'Syn of the konnyng of thy lord thow woost,
Telle how he dooth, I pray thee hertely,
Syn that he is so crafty and so sly ;
Where dwellé ye, if it to tellé be ?'

'In the suburbés of a toun,' quod he,
'Lurkyng in hernés, and in lanés blynde,
Where as thise robbours and thise theves
by kynde,

I holden hir pryvee fereful residence, 660
As they that dar nat shewen hir presence ;
So faren we, if I shal seye the sothe.'

'Now,' quod oure Hoost, 'yet lat me
talke to the ;

Why artow so discoloured of thy face ?'

'Peter !' quod he, 'God yeve it hardé
grace,

I am so uséd in the fyr to blowe,
That it hath chaungéd my colour, I trowe.
I am nat wont in no mirour to prie,
But swynké soore, and lerné multiplie ;
We blondren ever, and pouden in the fir,
And for al that we faille of our desir, 671

For ever we lakken oure conclusioun.
To muchel folk we doon illusioun,
And borwé gold, be it a pound or two,
Or ten, or twelve, or manye sommés mo,
And make hem wenen, at the leesté weye,
That of a pound we koudé maké tweye ;
Yet is it fals ; but ay we han good hope

It for to doon and after it we grope ;
But that sciéce is so fer us biforn 680
We mowen nat, al though we hadde it
sworn,

It over-take, it slit away so faste.
It wole us maken beggers atté laste.'

Whil this Yeman was thus in his talkyng
This Chanoun drough hym neer, and herde
al thyng

Which this Yeman spak, for suspecioun
Of mennés speche ever haddé this
Chanoun ;

For Catoun seith that he that gilty is
Demeth alle thyng bespoken of hym, y-wis.
That was the cause he gan so nyhym drawe
To his Yeman, to herknen al his sawe,
And thus he seyde unto his Yeman tho :

'Hoold thou thy pees, and speck no
wordés mo !

For if thou do, thou shalt it deere abyé !
Thou sclaudrest me, heere in this
compaignye,

And eek discoverest that thou sholdest
hyde.'

'Ye?' quod our Hoost, 'telle on what
so bityde ;

Of al his thretyng rekké nat a myte !'

'In feith,' quod he, 'namoore I do
but lyte.'

And whan this Chanoun saugh it wolde
nat be, 700

But his Yeman wolde telle his pryveteé,
He fledde away for verray sorwe and
shame.

'A !' quod the Yeman, 'heere shal
arise a game ;

Al that I kan anon now wol I telle,
Syn he is goon,—the foulé feend hym
quelle !

For never heer-after wol I with hym meete,
For peny ne for pound, I yow biheete !
He that me broghté first unto that game,
Er that he dye, sorwe have he and shame ;
For it is ernest to me, by my feith ! 710
That feele I wel, what so any man seith.
And yet for al my smert, and al my grief,

688. *Catoun: De Morib.* i. 17 : 'Consciús ipse
sibi de se putat omnia dici.'

690. *That was the cause, H⁶ By cause of
that.*

For al my sorwé, labour, and meschief,
 I koudé never leve it in no wise.
 Now woldé God, my witté myghte suffise
 To tellen al that longeth to that art ;
 And nathélees yow wol I tellen part ;
 Syn that my lord is goon I wol nat spare ;
 Swich thyng as that I knowe I wol declare.'

CANON'S YEOMAN'S TALE

Heere bigynneth the Chanouns Yeman his Tale

[PART I]

With this Chanoun I dwelt have seven
 yeer,⁷²⁰
 And of his science am I never the neer ;
 Al that I hadde I have y-lost ther-by,
 And, God woot, so hath many mo than I.
 Ther I was wont to be right fressh and gay
 Of clothyng and of oother good array,
 Now may I were an hose upon myn heed ;
 And wher my colour was bothe fressh
 and reed,
 Now is it wan and of a leden hewe,—
 Who so it useth, sooré shal he rewe,—
 And of myswynkyet bleréd is myn eye ;⁷³⁰
 Lo, which avantage is to multiplie !
 That slidyng science hath me maad so
 bare,
 That I have no good wher that ever I fare ;
 And yet I am endetted so ther-by,
 Of gold that I have borwéd, trewely,
 That whil I lyve I shal it quité never,—
 Lat every man be war by me for ever.
 What maner man that casteth hym ther-to,
 If he continue, I holde his thrift y-do ;
 For, so helpe me God, ther-by shal he
 nat wyne,⁷⁴⁰
 But empte his purs, and make his wittés
 thynne ;
 And whan he thurgh his madnesse and folye
 Hath lost his owene good thurgh jupartye,
 Thanne he exciteth oother folk ther-to,
 To lesen hir good, as he hymself hath do ;
 For unto shrewés joye it is and ese,
 To have hir felawes in peyne and disese,—
 Thus was I onés lernéd of a clerk.
 Of that no charge, I wol speke of our werk.
 Whan we been there as we shul exercise

Oure elvysshecraft, wesemen wonder wise,
 Oure termés been so clerghial and so
 queynte ;

I blowe the fir til that myn herté feynte.

What sholde I tellen eche proporcioun
 Of thyngés whiché that we werche upon ;
 As on fyve or sixe ounces, may wel be,
 Of silver, or som oother quantitee ;
 And bisye me to tellé yow the names
 Of orpyment, brent bonés, iren squames,
 That into poudrè grounden been ful smal ?
 And in an erthen pot how put is al, ⁷⁶¹
 And salt y-put in, and also papeer,
 Biforn thise poudrés that I speke of heer,
 And wel y-covered with a lampe of glas ;
 And muchel oother thyng which that
 ther was,

And of the pot and glasses enlutyng,
 That of the eyr myghté passe out no thyng,
 And of the esy fir, and smart also,
 Which that was maad, and of the care and wo
 That we hadden in oure matires sublymyng,
 And in amalgamyng and calcenyng ⁷⁷¹
 Of quyk-silver, y-clept mercurie crude ;
 For alle our sleightés we kan nat conclude.
 Oure orpyment and sublyméd mercurie,
 Oure grounden litarge eek on the porfurie,
 Of ech of thise of ounces a certeyn,
 Noght helpeth us, oure labour is in veyn ;
 Ne eek oure spirité ascencioun,
 Ne oure matires that lyen al fix adoun,
 Mowe in oure werkyng no thyng us availle ;
 For lost is al oure labour and travaille, ⁷⁸¹
 And al the cost, a twenty devel way,
 Is lost also, which we upon it lay.

Ther is also ful many another thyng
 That is unto oure craft apertenyng,
 Thogh I by ordre hem nat rehercé kan,
 By-causé that I am a lewéd man ;
 Yet wol I telle hem as they come to mynde,
 Thogh I ne kan nat sette hem in hir
 kynde,—

As boole armonyak, vertgrees, boras, ⁷⁹⁰
 And sondry vessels maad of erthe and glas ;
 Oure urnyals, and our descensories,
 Violes, crosletz, and sublymatories,
 Cucurbités, and alambikés eek,
 And othere swiché, deere ynough a leek :

^{790.} boole armonyak, astringent earth, from Armenia.

Nat nedeth it for to reherce hem alle,—
Wátrés rubifyng, and bolés galle,
Arsenyk, sal armonyak, and brymstoon ;
And herbés koude I telle eek many oon,
As egremoyne, valerian, and lunárie, 800
And othere swiche, if that me listé tarie ;
Oure lampés brennyng bothé nyght and
day,

To brynge aboute oure purpos if we may ;
Oure fourneys eek of calcinacioun,
And of watrés albificacioun,
Unsklekkéd lym, chalk, and gleyre of aney,
Poudrés diverse, asshes, donge, pisse, and
cley,

Cered pokettes, sal-peter and vitriole,
And diverse firés maad of wode and cole ;
Sal-tartre, alkaly and sal-preparat ; 810
And combust matires, and coagulat ;
Cley maad with hors and mannés heer,
and oille

Of tartre, alum, glas, berme, wort and
argoille,

Resalgar, and oure matires enbibyng,
And eek of oure matires encorporyng,
And of oure silver citrinacioun,
Oure cémentyng and fermentacioun,
Oure yngottés, testés, and many mo.

I wol yow telle as was me taught also
The fouré spirités and the bodies sevene,
By ordre, as ofte I herde my lord hem
nevene. 821

The firsté spirit quyk-silver called is,
The seconde orpyment, the thridde, y-wis,
Sal-armonyak, and the ferthe brymstoon.
The bodies sevene eek, lo, hem heere
anoon !

Sol gold is, and Luna silver we threpe,
Mars iren, Mercurie quyk-silver we clepe,
Saturnus leed, and Juppiter is tyn,
And Venus coper, by my fader kyn.

This curséd craft whoso wol exercise 830
He shal nogood han that hym maysuffise ;
For al the good he spendeth ther-abouté
He lesé shal ; ther-of have I no doute.
Whoso that listeth outen his folie,
Lat hym come forth and lerné multiplie ;
And everyman that oght hath in his cofre,
Lat hym appiere and wexe a philosophre ;
Ascauncé that crafte is so light to leere !
Nay, nay, God woot, al be hemonk or frere,

Preest orchanoun, or any oother wyght, 840
Though he sitte at his book bothe day
and night

In lernyng of this elvysshe nycé loore,
Al is in veyn, and, *parde*, muchel moore !
To lerne a lewéd man this subtiltee,—
Fy ! spek nat ther-of, for it wol nat bee ;
And konne he letterure, or konne henooun,
As in effect he shal fynde it al oon ;
For bothé two, by my salvacioun,
Concluden in multiplicacioun
Yliké wel, whan they han al y-do,— 850
This is to seyn, they failen bothé two.

Yet forgat I to maken rehersaille
Of watrés corosif, and of lymaille,
And of bodies mollificacioun,
And also of hire induracioun,
Oillés, ablucions, and metal fusible,—
To tellen al wolde passen any bible
That owher is ; wherfore, as for the beste,
Of alle thise namés now wol I me reste,
For as I trowe I have yow toold ynowe 860
To reyse a feend, al looke he never sorowe.

A ! nay ! lat be ; the philosophres stoon,
Elixer clept, we sechen faste echoon,
For hadde we hym, thanne were we siker
ynow ;

But, unto God of hevene I make avow,
For al oure craft, whan we han al y-do,
Withal ouresleighte, he wol nat come us to.
He hath y-made us spenden muchel good,
For sorwe of which almoost we wexen
wood, 869

But that good hopé crepeth in oure herte,
Supposynge ever, though we soré smerte,
To be releevéd by hym afterward.
Swich supposyng and hope is sharpe and
hard ;

I warne yow wel it is to seken ever ;
That *futur temps* hath maad men to dis-
sever,
In trust ther-of, from al that ever they
hadde.

Yet of that art they kan nat wexen sadde,
For unto hem it is a bitter-sweete,—
Sosemethit,—for naddethey but a sheete,
Which that they myghté wrappe hem
inne at nyght, 880

And a brat to walken inne by day-lyght,
881. *brat*, cloak ; *H⁶ bak*, back-cloth.

They wolde hem selle, and spenden on
this craft ;

They kan nat stynté til no thyng be laft ;
And evermooré, where that ever they goon,
Men may hem knowé by smel of brymston.
For al the world they styngen as a goot ;
Hir savour is so ranmyssh and so hoot
That though a man a milc from hem be
The savour wole infecte hym, trusté me.
Lo thus by smellyng, and threedbare
array, 890

If that men liste, this folk they knowé may ;
And if a man wole aske hem pryvély,
Why they been clothéd so unthrifily,
They right anon wol rownen in his ere
And seyn, that if that they espiéd were,
Men wolde hem slee by-cause of hirsience.
Lo, thus this folk bitrayen innocence !

Passe over this, I go my tale unto.
Er that the pot be on the fire y-do,
Of metals with a certeyn quantitee 900
My lord hem tempreth, and no man but
he,—

Now he is goon I dare seyn boldcly,—
For as men seyn he kan doon craftily,
Algate I woot wel he hath swich a name,
And yet ful oft he renneth in a blame ;
And wite ye how? Ful ofte it happeth so
The pot to-brekeþ, and farewel, al is go.
These metals been of so greet violence
Oure wallés mowe nat make hem
resistence, 909

But if they weren wrought of lym and stoon,
They percen so, and thurgh the wal they
goon,

And somme of hem synken into the
ground,—

Thus han we lost by tymés many a pound,—
And somme are scatered al the floor aboute,
Somme lepe into the roof, withouten doute.
Though that the feend noght in oure
sighté hym shewe,

I trowe he with us be, that ilké shrewe !
In hellé, where that he is lord and sire,
Nis ther moore wo, ne moore rancour,
ne ire. 919

Whan that oure pot is broke, as I have
sayd,

Every man chit and halt hym yvele apayd.
919. H³ Nis ther no more wo, ne anger, ne ire.

Somme seyde it was along on the fir
makyng,

Somme seyde nay, it was on the blowyng,—
Thanne was I fered, for that was myn office.

‘Straw!’ quod the thridde, ‘ye been
lewed and nyce,

It was nat tempréd as it oghté be.’

‘Nay,’ quod the fourthé, ‘stynt and
herkné me ;

By-cause our fir ne was nat maad of beech,
That is the cause, and oother noon, so
theech.’

I kan nat telle wheron it was along, 930
But wel I woot greet strif us is among.

‘What!’ quod my lord, ‘ther is
namoore to doone ;

Of these perils I wol be war eft-soone.

I am right siker that the pot was crased ;
Be as he may, be ye no thyng amased.
As usage is, lat swepe the floor as swithe,
Plukke up your hertés and beeth glad
and blithe !’

The mullok on an heepe i-swepéd was,
And on the floor y-cast a canévas, 939
And al this mullok in a syve y-throwe,
And sifted and y-pikéd many a throwe.

‘Pardee!’ quod oon, ‘somwhat of
oure metal

Yet is ther heere, though that we han
nat al.

Al though this thyng myshappéd have as
now,

Another tyme it may be wel ynow.

Us mosté putte oure good in aventure ;

A marchant, *pardee!* may nat ay endure,
Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee.

Somtyme his good is drenchéd in the see,
And somtyme comth it sauf unto the londe.’

‘Pees!’ quod my lord, ‘the nexte
tyme I shal fonde 951

To bryngen oure craft al in another plite ;
And but I do, sires, lat me han the wite ;
Ther was defeaute in somewhat, wel I woot.’

Another seyde the fir was over hoot ;
But, be it hoot or coold, I dar seye this,
That we concluden evermoore amys.

We faille of that which that we wolden
have,

And in our madnesse evermoore we rave ;
941. y-pikéd, picked over ; H³ y-plukked.

And whan we been togidres everichoon
 Every man semeth a Salomon ; 961
 But althyng which that shyneth as the gold,
 Nis nat gold, as that I have herd it told ;
 Ne every appul that is fair at eye
 Ne is nat good, what somen clappe or crye.
 Right so, lo, fareth it amonges us :
 Hé that semeth the wiseste, by Jhesus,
 Is moost fool, whan it cometh to the preef ;
 And he that semeth trewest is a thief.
 That shul ye knowe, er that I fro yow
 wende, 970
 By that I of my tale have maad an ende.

[PART II]

Ther is a Chanoun of Religioun
 Amonges us wolde infecte al a toun.
 Though it as greet were as was Nynyvee,
 Rome, Alisaundre, Troye, and othere
 three.

His sleightes and his infinit falsnesse
 Ther koudé no man writen, as I gesse,
 Though that he lyvé myghte a thousand
 yeer.

In al this world of falshede nis his peer,
 For in his termés so he wolde hym
 wynde, 980

And speke his wordés in so sly a kynde,
 Whanne he communé shal with any wight,
 That he wol make hym doten anon right,
 But it a feend be, as hymselfen is.

Ful many a man hath he bigiled er this,
 And wole, if that he lyvé may a while ;
 And yet men ride and goon ful many a mile
 Hym for to seke and have his a queyntaunce,
 Noght knowynge of his falsé governaunce ;
 And if yow list to yeve me audience, 990
 I wol it tellé heere in youre presence.

But, worshipful chanouns religious,
 Ne demeth nat that I desclaundre youre
 hous,

Although my talé of a chanoun bee ;
 Of every ordre som shrewe is, *pardee*,
 And God forbede that al a compaignye
 Sholde rewe o singuleer mannés folye.
 To sclaunder yow is no thyng myn entente,
 But to correcten that is mys, I mente.
 This talé was nat oonly toold for yow, 1000

978. *lyve myghte*, H⁶ *myghte lyven*.

But eek for othere mo ; ye woot wel how
 That among Cristés apostellés twelve
 Ther nas no traytour but Judas hymselfe.
 Thanne why sholde al the remenant have
 a blame,
 That gillees were ? By yow I seye the
 same,
 Save oonly this, if ye wol herkne me,—
 If any Judas in youre covent be,
 Remoeveth hym bitymés, I yow rede,
 If shame, or los, may causen any drede,
 And beeth no thyng displeased, I yow
 preye, 1010
 But in this cas herketh what I shal seye.

In Londoun was a preest, an annuëleer,
 That ther-innedwelléd haddé many a yeer,
 Which was so plesaunt and so servysable
 Unto the wyf, where as he was at table,
 That she wolde suffre hym no thyng for
 to paye

For bord ne clothyng, wente he never so
 gaye ;

And spendyng silver hadde he right ynow.
 Ther-of no fors, I wol procede as now,
 And tellé forth my tale of the chanoun
 That broghté this preest to confusioun.

This falsé chanoun cam upon a day
 Unto this preestés chambre, wher he lay,
 Bisechyng hym to lene hym a certeyn
 Of gold, and he wolde quite it hym ageyn.
 ‘Leene me a marc,’ quod he, ‘but dayés
 three,

And at my day I wol it quiten thee ;
 And if so be that thou me fyndé fals
 Another day, do hange me by the hals.’

This preest hym took a marc, and that
 as swithe, 1030

And this chanoun hym thankéd ofté sithe,
 And took his leve, and wenté forthe his
 weye,

And at the thridde day broghte his moneye,
 And to the preest he took his gold agayn,
 Wher-of this preest was wonder glad and
 fayn.

‘Certés,’ quod he, ‘nothyng anoyeth me
 To lene a man a noble, or two, or thre,

1012. *an*, om. E.

1012. *annuëleer*, a priest employed to sing
 anniversary masses for the dead.

Or what thyng were in my possessioun,
Whan he so trewe is of condicioun 1039
That in no wise he brekè wole his day;
To swich a man I kan never seye nay.'

'What!' quod this chanoun, 'sholde
I be untrewé?

Nay, that were thyng y-fallen al of newe.
Trouthe is a thyng that I wol ever kepe,
Unto that day in which that I shal crepe
Into my grave, or ellis, God forbede!

Bileveth this, as siker as the Crede.
God thanke I, and in good tymé be it sayd,
That ther was never man yet yvele apayd
For gold ne silver that he to me lente;
Ne never falskede in myn herte I mente;
And, sire,' quod he, 'now of my
pryvètee,—

Syn ye so goodlich han been unto me,
And kithéd to me so greet gentillesse,—
Somwhat to quyté with youre kyndénesse
I wol yow shewe, and if yow list to leere.
I wol yow teché pleylny the manere
How I kan werken in philosophie;
Taket good heede ye shul wel seen at eye
That I wol doon a maistrie er I go.' 1060

'Ye,' quod the preest, 'ye, sire, and
wol ye so?

Marie! ther-of I pray yow hertely.'

'At youre comandément, sire, trewely,'
Quod the chanoun, 'and ellis God
forbeede.'

Loo, how this theef koude his servicé
beede!

Ful sooth it is that swiche profred servyse
Stynketh, as witnessen thise oldé wyse;
And that ful soone I wol it verifie
In this chanoun, roote of alle trecherie,
That ever moore delit hath and glad-
nesse,— 1070

Swiche feendly thoughtés in his herte
imprese,—

How Cristés peple he may to meschief
brynge.

God kepe us from his false dissymulynge!
Noght wisté this preest with whom
that he delt,

Ne of his harm comynge he no thyng felte.
O sely preest, O sely innocent!
With coveitise anon thou shalt be blent.
O gracieles, ful blynd is thy conceite,

No thyng ne artow war of the deceite
Which that this fox y-shapen hath for thee;
His wily wrenches thou ne mayst nat flee;
Wherefore, to go to the conclusioun
That refereth to thy confusioun,
Unhappy man, anon I wol me hye
To tellen thyn unwit and thy folye,
And eek the falsnesse of that oother
wrecche,

As ferforth as my konnyngé may strecche.

This chanoun was my lord, ye wolden
weene—

Sire Hoost, in feith, and by the hevenes
queene,

It was another chanoun and nat hee, 1090
That kan an hundred foold moore subtiltee.
He hath bitrayed folkés many tyme;
Of his falskede it dulleth me to ryme.
Ever whan I speke of his falskede,
For shame of hym my chekés wexen rede;
Alगतés they bigynnen for to glowe,
For reednesse have I noon, right wel I
knowe,

In my visagé; for fumés diverse
Of metals, whiche ye han herd mereherce,
Consumed and wasted han my reednesse.
Now taak heede of this chanons cursed-
nesse. 1101

'Sire,' quod he to the preest, 'lat youre
man gon

For quyk-silver, that we hadde it anon,
And lat hym bryngen ounces two or three,
And whan he comth, as fasté shal ye see
A wonder thyng which ye saugh never
er this.'

'Sire,' quod the preest, 'it shal be
doon y-wis.'

He bad hisservant fecchen hym this thyng,
And he al redy was at his biddynge, 1109
And wente hym forth, and cam anon agayn
With this quyk-silver, soothly for to
sayn;

And toke thise ounces thre to the chanoun,
And he hem leyde faire and wel adoun,
And bad the servant colés for to brynge.
That he anon myghte go to his werkynge.

The colés right anon weren y-fet,
And this chanoun took out a crossélet
Of his bosom, and shewed it to the preest.

1111. *soothly, H⁵ shortly.*

'This instrument,' quod he, 'which that thou seest,

Taake in thyn hand and put thyself therinne
Of this quyk-silver an ounce, and heer bigynne, 1121

In the name of Crist, to wexe a filosofre.
Ther been ful fewe to whiche I woldè profre
To shewen hem thus muche of myscience:
For ye shul seen heer by experience,
That this quyk-silver wol I mortifye,
Right in youre sighte anon, I wol nat lye,
And make it as good silver and as fyn,
As ther is any in youre purse or myn, 1130
Or ellèswhere, and make it malliable;
And ellès holdeth me fals and unable
Amongès folk for ever to appeere.

I have a poudre heer, that coste me deere,
Shal make al good, for it is cause of al
My konnyng, which that I yow shewen shal.

Voydith youre man and lat hym be ther-out,
And shette the dorè, whils we been aboute
Oure pryvètee, that no man us espie,
Whilès we werke in this philosophie.'

Al as he bad fulfilled was in dede; 1140
This ilkè servant anonright out yede,
And his maister shettè the dore anon,
And to hire labour spedily they gon.

This preest at this cursèd chanouns biddýng

Upon the fir anon settè this thyng,
And blew the fir and bisyed hym ful faste;
And this chanoun into the crosselet cast
A poudre,—noot I wher-of that it was
Y-maad, outhur of chalk, outhur of glas,
Or somewhat ellès, was nat worth a flye,—
Toblynde with the preest, and bad hym hye
The colès for to couchen al above
The crosselet; 'For in tokenyng I thee love,'

Quod this chanoun, 'thyne owene handès two

Shul werche al thyng which shal heer be do.'

'Graunt mercy!' quod the preest,
and was ful glad,

And couchèd colès as that chanoun bad;
And while he bisy was, this feendly wrecche,

This false chanoun,—the foulè feend hym fecche!— 1159

Out of his bosom took a bechen cole,
In which ful subtilly was maad an hole,
And therinne put was of silver lemaille
An ounce, and stoppèd was withouten faille
The hole with wex, to kepe the lemaille in;
And understandeth, that this falsè gyn
Was nat maad ther, but it was maad bfore;
And othere thyngès I shal tellen moore
Hereafterward, whiche that he with hym broghte;

Er hecam there, hym to bigile he thoghte;
And so he dide, er that they wente atwynne; 1170

Til he had tervèd hym, he koude nat blyne.

It dulleth me, whan that I of hym speke;
On his falschedè fayn wolde I me wreke,
If I wiste how, but he is heere and there,
He is so variaunt, he abit nowhere.

But taketh heede now, sires, for Goddès love!

He took this cole of which I spak above,
And in his hand he baar it pryvely,
And whyles the preest couchèd bisily
The colès, as I toldè yow er this, 1180
This chanoun seyde, 'Freend, ye doon amys,

This is nat couchèd as it oghtè be;
But soone I shal amenden it,' quod he.
'Now lat me medle ther-with but a while,
For of yow have I pitee, by Seint Gile!
Ye been right hoot, I se wel how ye swete;
Have heer a clooth, and wipe away the wete.'

And whylès that the preest wipèd his face,
This chanoun took his cole with hardè grace, 1189

And leyde it above, upon the myddeward
Of the crosselet, and blew wel afterward,
Til that the colès gonnè fastè brenne.

'Now yeve us drynkè,' quod the chanoun thenne,

'As swithe al shal be wel, I undertake.
Sittè we doun, and lat us myrie make';

1171. *terved*, stripped. Dr. Skeat's restoration for the common reading *terned*.

1189. *with harde* (Camb. *sory*) *grace*, H⁵ I *schrewe his faas*.

And whan that this chanonès bechen cole
Was brent, al the lemaille out of the hole
Into the crosselet fil anon adoun,
And so it mostè nedès, by resoun, 1199
Syn it so evene aboven couchèd was ;
But ther-of wiste the preest no thyng, alas !
He demèd alle the coles ylichè good,
For of that sleighte he no thyng under-
stood ;

And whan this alkamystre saugh his
tyme,—

‘Ris up,’ quod he, ‘sire preest, and
stonde by me,

And for I woot wel ingot have ye noon,
Gooth walketh forth, and brynge us a
chalk stoon,

For I wol make it of the samè shape
That is an ingot, if I may han hape ;
And bryngeth eek with yow a bolle or a
panne 1210

Ful of water, and ye shul se wel thanne
How that oure bisynesse shal thryve and
preeve ;

And yet, for ye shul han no mysbilleeve,
Ne wrong conceite of me in youre absence,
I ne wol nat been out of youre presence,
But go with yow, and come with yow
ageyn.’

The chambrè dorè, shortly for to seyn,
They openèd landshette, and went hir weye,
And forth with hem they carieden the keye,
And coome agayn withouten any delay.
What sholde I tarien al the longè day ?
He took the chalk and shoope it in the
wise

Of an ingot, as I shal yow devyse.

I seye, he took out of his owene sleeve
A teyne of silver—yvele moot he cheeve !—
Which that ne was nat but an ounce of
weighte ;

And taketh heede now of his cursèd
sleighte.

He shoope his ingot in lengthe and
eek in breede

Of this teyne, withouten any drede,
So slyly that the preest it nat espide, 1230
And in his sleeve agayn he gan it hide,
And fro the fir he took up his mateere
And in thyngot putte it with myrie cheere,
And in the water-vessel he it caste,

Whan that hym luste, and bad the preest
as faste,

‘Look what ther is, put in thin hand
and grope,

Thow fyndè shalt ther silver, as I hope.’
What, devel of hellè ! sholde it ellis be ?
Shavyng of silver silver is, *parde* ! 1239
He putte his hand in, and took up a teyne
Of silver fyn, and glad in every veyne
Was this preest, when he saugh that it
was so.

‘Goddès blessing, and his moodres also,
And allè halwès, have ye, sire chanoun !’
Seydè this preest, ‘and I hir malisoun !
But, and ye vouchèsauf to techen me
This noble craft and this subtiltee,
I wol be youre in al that ever I may.’

Quod the chanoun, ‘Yet wol I make
assay 1249

The seconde tyme, that ye may taken heede
And been expert of this, and in youre neede
Another daye assaye in myn absence
This disciplyne, and this crafty science.
Lat take another ounce,’ quod he tho,
‘Of quyk-silver, withouten wordès mo,
And do therwith as ye han doon er this
With that oother, which that now silver is.’

This preest hym bisieth in al that he kan
To doon as this chanoun, this cursèd man,
Comanded hym, and faste he blew the fir,
For to come to the effect of his desir ; 1261
And this chanoun, right in the meenè
while,

Al redy was the preest eft to bigile,
And for a contenance in his hand he bar
An holwè stikkè,—taak kepe and be
war,—

In the ende of which an ounce and namoore
Of silver lemaille put was (as bifore
Was in his cole) and stoppèd with wex weel,
For to kepe in his lemaille every deel. 1269
And whil this preest was in his bisynesse,
This chanoun with his stikkè gan hym
dresse

To hym anon, and his poudré caste in
As he did er,—the devel out of his skyn
Hym terve, I pray to God, for his falshede !
For he was ever fals in thought and dede,—
And with this stikke, above the crosselet,

1274. *terve*, H⁶ *torne*, *turne* ; see l. 1171.

That was ordeynéd with that falsé get,
 He stired the colés, til relenté gan
 The wex agayn the fir, as every man,
 But it a fool be, woot wel it moot nede; ¹²⁸⁰
 And al that in the stikké was out yede,
 And in the crosselet hastily it fel.

Nów, good sires, what wol ye bet
 than wel?

Whan that this preest thus was bigiled
 ageyn,

Supposynge noght but treuthé, sooth to
 seyn,

He was so glad that I kan nat expresse
 In nomanere his myrthe and his gladnesse;
 And to the chanoun he profred eftsoone
 Body and good. 'Ye,' quod the chanoun
 soone,

'Though poure I be, crafty thou shalt
 me fynde; ¹²⁹⁰

I warné thee yet is ther moore bihynde.
 Is ther any coper her-inne?' seyde he.

'Ye,' quod the preest, 'sire, I trowe
 wel ther be.'

'Ellés go bye us som, and that as swithe.
 Now, goodé sire, go forth thy wey and
 hy the.'

He wente his wey, and with the copercam,
 And this chanoun it in his hand's nam,
 And of that coper weyed out but an ounce.

Al to symple is my tonge to pronounce,
 As ministré of my wit, the doublenesse ¹³⁰⁰
 Of this chanoun, roote of alle cursednesse.
 He semed frendly to hem that knewe
 hym noght,

But he was feendly bothe in werk and
 thoght.

It weerieth me to telle of his falsnesse,
 And nathéless yet wol I it expresse
 To that entent men may be war therby,
 And for noon oother causé, trewely.

He putté the ounce of coper in the
 crosselet,

And on the fir as swithe he hath it set,
 And caste in poudre, and made the preest
 to blowe, ¹³¹⁰

And in his werkynge for to stoupé lowe,
 As he dide er, and al nas but a jape.
 Right as hym liste the preest he made
 his ape;

And afterward in the ingot he it caste,

And in the panné putte it at the laste,
 Of water. In he putte his owene hand;
 And in his sleve, as ye biforen-hand
 Herdè me telle, he hadde a silver teyne;
 Hieslyly tooke it out,—this curséd heyne,—
 Unwityng this preest of his falsé craft, ¹³²⁰
 And in the pannés botme he hath it laft,
 And in the water rombleth to and fro,
 And wonder pryvèly took up also
 The coper teyne, noght knowyngé this
 preest,

And hidle it, and hym henté by the breest,
 And to hym spak and thus seyde in his game,
 'Stoupeth adoun, by God, ye be to blame,
 Helpeth me now, as I dide yow whil-er,
 Putte in youre hand, and looketh what
 is ther.'

This preest took up this silver teyne
 anon, ¹³³⁰

And thanné seyde the chanoun, 'Lat us gon
 With thise thre teynés whiche that we han
 wrought

To som goldsmyth, and wite if they been
 ought;

For, by my feith, I noldé for myn hood,
 But if they wéré silver fyn and good,
 And that as swithé precevé it shal bee.'

Unto the goldsmyth with thise teynés
 thre

They wente, and putte thise teynés in
 assay

To fir and hamer; myghte noman seye nay,
 But that they weren as hem oghté be. ¹³⁴⁰

This sottéd preest, who was gladder
 than he?

Was never brid gladder agayn the day,
 Ne nyghtyngale in the sesoun of May.

Nas never man that lusté bet to syngé,
 Ne ladye lustier in carolyngé,

Or, for to speke of love and wommanhede,
 Ne knyght in armes to doon an hardy dede

To stonden in gracé of his lady deere,
 Than hadde this preest this soory craft

to leere; ¹³⁴⁹

And to the chanoun thus he spak and seyde:
 'For love of God, that for us allé deyde,

And as I may deserve it unto yow,
 What shal this receite costé, telleth now?'

'By oure lady,' quod this chanoun,
 'it is deere,

I warne yow wel, for save I and a frere
In Engèlond ther kan no man it make.'

'No fors,' quod he, 'now, sire, for
Goddès sake,

What shal I payé? Telleth me, I preye.'

'Y-wis,' quod he, 'it is ful deere, I seye.

Sire, at o word, if that thee list it have,

Ye shul paye fourty pound, so God me
save; 1361

And nere the freendship that ye dide er this
To me ye sholdé payé moore, y-wis.'

This preest the somme of fourty pound
anon

Of noblès fette, and took hem everichon
To this chanoun, for this ilké receit.

Al his werkynge nas but fraude and deceit.

'Sire preest,' he seyde, 'I kepè han
no loos

Of my craft, for I wolde it kept were cloos,

And, as ye love me, kepeth it secree; 1370

For, and men knewen al my soutiltee,

By God, they wolden han so greet envye

To me, by cause of my philosophye,

I sholde be deed; ther were noon oother
weye.'

'God it forbecdè,' quod the preest;

'what say ye?

Yet hadde I levere spenden al the good

Which that I have,—and ellès wexe I
wood!—

Than that ye sholden falle in swiche
mescheef.'

'For youre good wyl, sire, have ye
right good preef,'

Quod the chanoun, 'and farewel, *grant*
mercy!' 1380

He wente his wey and never the preest
hym sy

After that day; and whan that this preest
sholde

Maken assay at swich tyme as he wolde

Of this receit, farwel, it wolde nat be!

Lo, thus byjapèd and bigiled was he.

Thus maketh he his introduccioun,

To bryngé folk to hir destruccioun.

Considereth sires, how that in ech estaat,

Bitwixé men and gold ther is debaat

So ferforth, that unnethé is ther noon. 1390

This multiplying blent so many oon,

That, in good feith, I trowé that it bee

The causé grettest of swich scarsetee.

Philosophres speken so mystily

In thiscraft, that men kan nat cometherby,

For any wit that men han now-a-dayes.

They mowe wel chiteren as doon these
jayes,

And in hir termès sette hir lust and peyne,

But to hir purpos shul they never atteyne.

A man may lightly lerne, if he have aught,

To multiplie, and bryngé his good to
naught. 1401

Lo, swich a lucre is in this lusty game

A mannès myrthe it wol turne unto grame,

And empten also grete and hevyé purses,

And maken folk for to purchacen curses

Of hem that han hir good therto y-lent.

O fy, for shamé! they that han been brent,

Allas! kan they nat flee the firès heete?

Ye that it use I redé ye it leete,

Lest ye lese al, for 'bet than never is late';

Never to thryvè were to long a date. 1411

Though ye prolle ay, ye shul it never fynde.

Ye been as boold as is Bayard the blynde,

That blondreth forth and peril casteth
noon.

He is as boold to renne agayn a stoon,

As for to goon bisidés in the weye.

So faren ye that multiplie, I seye;

If that youre eyen kan nat seen aright,

Looke that youre myndé lakkè noght his
sight,

For though ye looken never so brode, and
stare, 1420

Ye shul nat wynne a myte on that chaffare,

But wasten al that ye may rape and renne.

Withdraweth the fir, lest it to fasté
brenne,—

Medleth namoorè with that art, I mene

For, if ye doon, youre thrift is goon fulclene:

And right as swithe, I wol yow tellen heere,

What philosophres seyn in this mateere.

Lo, thus seith Arnold of the Newé-Toun,

As his *Rosarie* maketh menciou; 1430

He seith right thus, withouten any lye,

Ther may no man mercurie mortifie,

But it be with his brother knowlechyng.

1413. *Bayard*, a typical name for a horse.

1428. *Arnold of the Newe-Toun*, Arnoldus de Villanova, a philosophical physician of the 13th century.

How that he which that first seyde this
thyng

Of philosophres fader was, Hermes ;
He seith how that the dragon doutelees
Ne dyeth nat, but if that he be slayn
With his 'brother' ; and that is for to sayn
By the dragon Mercurie, and noon oother,
He understood, and brymstoon by his
brother,

That out of Sol and Luna were y-drawe ;
'And therfore,' seyde he, 'taak heede
to my sawe ;' 1441

Lat noman bisye hym this arte for to seche,
But if that he thentencioun and speche
Of philosophres understande kan ;
And, if he do, he is a lewéd man,
For this science and this konnyng,' quod he,
'Is of the secree of secrees, *pardee*.'

Also ther was a disciple of Plato
That on a tymé seyde his maister to,
As his book *Senior* wol bere witness, 1450
And this was his demande, in southfast-
nesse,

'Telle me the namé of the privee stoon.'
And Plato answerde unto hym anon,
'Také the stoon that *Titanos* men name'—

1434. *Hermes*, i.e. Hermes Trismegistus.

1435. *the dragon*, Mercury.

1440. *Sol and Luna*, i.e. gold and silver.

1447. The allusion is to the pseudo-Aristotelian
Secreta Secretorum.

1450. *his book Senior*. 'The book alluded to is
printed in the *Theatrum Chemicum* under this
title: "Senioris Zadith fil. Hamuelis tabula
chemica." The story which follows of Plato and
his disciples is there told, with some variations,
of Solomon' (Tyrwhitt). Dr. Skeat notes that
the name Plato occurs three times only a few
lines below, which explains Chaucer's mistake.

'Which is that?' quod he. '*Magnasia*
is the same,'

Seyde Plato. 'Ye, sire, and is it thus?
This is *ignotum per ignotus*.

What is Magnasia, good sire, I yow preye?'

'It is a water that is maad, I seye,
Of elementes fouré,' quod Plato. 1460

'Telle me the rooté, good sire,' quod
he tho,

'Of that water, if it be youré wille.'

'Nay, nay,' quod Plato, 'certein that
I nylle ;

The philosophres sworn were everychoon
That they sholden discovere it unto noon,
Ne in no book it write in no manere,
For unto Crist it is so lief and deere,
That he wol nat that it discovered bee,
But where it liketh to his deitee
Man for tenspire, and eek for to deffende
Whom that hym liketh ; lo, this is the
ende.' 1471

Thanne conclude I thus, sith that God
of hevene

Ne wil nat that the philosophres nevene
How that a man shal come unto this
ston,

I rede as for the besté lete it goon ;
For who so maketh God his adversarie,
As for to werken anythyng in contrarie
Of his wil, certés never shal he thryve,
Thogh that he multiplié terme of his lyve ;
And there a poynt ; for ended is my tale.
God sende every trewe man boote of his
bale. *Amen*. 1481

1461. *route*, H⁶ *roche*.

GROUP H

Words of Divers of the Pilgrims

Wooryenat where ther stant a litel toun,
Which that y-clepéd is Bobbe-up-and-
doun,

Under the Blec in Caunterbury weye ?

2. *Bobbe-up-and-doun*, usually identified with
Harbledown, but in the parish of Thanington
there is a field of 'Up-and-Down' which, if,
as is probable, the old Canterbury road took a
somewhat different direction from the modern
one, may be the site intended.

3. *the Blee*, Bleau forest.

Therganoure Hoosté for to jape and pleye,
And seyde, 'Sires, what ! Dun is in the
Myre !

Is ther no man for preyere ne for hyre,
That wole awake oure felawe al bihynde ?
A theef myght hym ful lightly robbe and
bynde.

5. *Dun is in the Myre* (the horse is stuck), the
name of an old game in which the company had
to extricate a wooden 'Dun' from an imaginary
slough.

See how he nappeth ! see how, for cokkés
bones !

As he wol fallé fro his hors atones. ¹⁰
Is that a Cook of Londoun ? with
meschaunce !

Do hym come forth, he knoweth his
penaunce,

For he shal telle a talé, by my fey !

Although it be nat worth a botel hey.

Awake, thou Cook, ' quod he, ' God yeve
thee sorwe !

What eyeth thee to slepé by the morwe ?
Hastow had fleen al nyght, or artow
dronke ?

Or hastow with som quene al nyght
y-swonke,

So that thou mayst nat holden up thyn
heed ?'

This Cook, that was ful pale and no
thyng reed, ²⁰

Seyde to oure Hoost, ' So God my soule
blesse,

As ther is falle on me swich hevynesse,
Noot I nat why, that me were levere slepe
Than the besté galon wyn in Chepe.'

' Wel,' quod the Maunciple, ' if it may
doon ese

To thee, sire Cook, and to no wight displese
Which that heere rideth in this com-
paignye,

And that oure Hoost wole of his curteisye,
I wol as now excuse thee of thy tale,

For, in good feith, thy visage is ful pale,
Thyne eyen daswen eek, as that me
thynketh, ³¹

And wel I woot thy breeth ful souré
stynketh,

That sheweth wel thou art nat wel disposed ;
Of me certeyn thou shalt nat been y-glosed.

See how he ganeth, lo, this dronken wight !
As though he worldé swolwe us anon right.

Hoold cloos thy mouth, man, by thy fader
kyn !

The devel of hellé sette his foot ther-in !
Thy curséd breeth infecté wole us alle.

Fy, stynkyng swyn ! fy, foulé moote thou
falle ! ⁴⁰

A ! taketh heede, sires, of this lusty man !
Now, sweete sire, wol ye justen atté fan ?

9. *how, for cokkes, 114 for Goddess.*

Therto me thynketh ye been wel y-shape !
I trowé that ye dronken han wyn ape,
And that is whan men pleyen with a straw.'

And with this speche the Cook wax
wrooth and wraw,

And on the Manciple he gan noddé faste
For lakke of speche, and doun the hors

hym caste,

Where as he laytill that men up hym took.

This was a fair chyvachee of a Cook. ⁵⁰

Allas ! he naddé holde hym by his ladel !

And er that he agayn were in his sadel
Ther was greet showvyng, both to and fro,

To lifte hym up, and muchel care and wo,
So unweeldy was this sory, palléd goost.

And to the Manciple thanne spak oure

Hoost :

' By-causé drynke hath dominacioun
Upon this man, by my savacioun,

I trowe, he lewedly wolde telle his tale,

For were it wyn, or oold or moysty ale,
That he hath dronke, he speketh in his

nose, ⁶¹

And fneseth faste, and eek he hath the pose.

He hath also to do moore than ynough

To kepe hym and his capul out of slough ;

And if he fallé from his capul eftsoone,

Thanne shal we allé have ynogh to doone,

In lifyng up his hevy, dronken cors ;

Telle on thy tale, of hym make I no fois.

' But yet, Manciple, in feith thou art
to nyce,

Thus openly repreve hym of his vice ; ⁷⁰

Another day he wole, peraventure,

Reclaymè thee and bryngé thee to lure,—

I meene, he speké wole of smalé thynges

As for to pynchen at thy rekenynges :

That were nat honeste, if it cam to preef.'

' No,' quod the Manciple, ' that were
a greet mescheef !

Somyghte he lightly bryngeme in the snare,

Yet hadde I levere payen for the mare

Which he rit on, than he sholde with me
stryve. ⁷⁹

I wol nat wratthe hym, al somoot I thrive !

That that I spake I seyde it in my bourde ;

And wite ye what ? I have heer in agourde

44. *wyn ape.* The lion, ape, sheep, and pig
represented degrees of drunkenness; the ape
answering to the 'joyous' stage, an unkind jest
at the cook's sullenness.

A draghte of wyn, ye, of a ripe grape,
And right anon ye shul seen a good jape.
This Cookshal drynke ther-of, ifthat I may.
Uppeyne of deeth, he wol nat seye me nay.'

And certeynly, to tellen as it was,
Of this vessel the Cook drankefaste, allas!
What neded hym? he drank ynough
biforn;

89

And whan he haddé pouped in this horn,
To the Manciple he took the gourdeagayn;
And of that drynke the Cook was wonder
fayn,

And thanked hym in swich wise as he
koude.

Thanne gan oure Hoost to laughen
wonder loude,

And seyde, 'I se wel it is necessarie,
Where that we goon, good drynke we
with us carie,

For that wol turné rancour and disese
Tacord and love, and many a wrong apese.

'Othou Bacus! y-blessed be thyname!
That so kanst turnen earnest into game,
Worshiþe and thank be to thy deitee!

Of that mateere ye gete namoore of me;
Telle on thy tale, Manciple, I thee preye.'

'Wel, sire,' quod he, 'now herkneth
what I seye.'

MANCIPLE'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Manciples Tale of
the Crowe*

Whan Phebus dwelled heere in this
erthe adoun,

As oldé bookès maken menciouun,
He was the moosté lusty bachiler
In al this world, and eek the best archer.
He slow Phitoun, the serpent, as he lay
Slepyng agayn the sonne upon a day,
And many another noble worthy dede
He with his bowé wroughte, as men may
rede.

Manciple's Tale. 'The fable of the Crow,
which is the subject of the Manciple's Tale, has
been related by so many authors from Ovid down
to Gower that it is impossible to say whom
Chaucer principally followed' (Tyrwhitt).

105. *erthe, E world.*

109. *Phitoun, Python.*

Pleyen he koude on every mynstralcie,
And syngen, that it was a melodie

To heeren of his cleeré voys the soun.
Certés the kyng of Thebés, Amphiouun,
That with his syngyng walléd that citee,
Koude never syngen half so wel as hee.
Therto he was the semeliesté man 119
That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.
What nedeth it his fetures to discryve,
For in this world was noon so fair on lyve.
He was ther-with fulfild of gentillesse,
Of honour, and of paisit worthynesse.

This Phebus that was flour of bachilrie,
As wel in fredom as in chivalrie,
For his desport, in signe eek of victorie
Of Phitoun, so as telleth us the storie,
Was wont to beren in his hand a bowe.

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a
crowe 130
Which in a cage he fostred many a day,
And taughte it speken, as men teche a jay.
Whit was this crowe as is a snow-whit
swan,

And countrefete the speche of every man
He koudé, whan he sholdé telle a talé;
Ther-with in al this world no nyghtyngale
Ne koudé, by an hondred thousand deel,
Syngen so wonder myrily and weel.

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a wyf,
Which that he lovede mooré than his lyf,
And nyght and day dide ever his diligence
Hir for to plesse, and doon hire reverence;
Save oonly, if the sothe that I shal sayn,
Jalous he was and wolde have kept hire fayn,
For hym were looth byjapéd for to be;
And so is every wight in swich degree;
But all in ydel, for it availleth noght.
A good wyf that is clene of werk and thought
Sholde nat been kept in noon awayt,
certayn;

And trewely the labour is in vayn 150
To kepe a shrewé, for it wol nat bee.
This holde I for a verray nycetee,
To spillé labour for to kepe wyves;
Thus writen oldé clerkés in hir lyves.

But now to purpos, as I first bigan;
This worthy Phebus dooth all that he kan
To plesen hire, wenyng by swich
plessaunce,

147. *in ydel, H¹ for nought.*

And for his manhede and his governaunce,
That no man sholde han put hym from
hire grace ;

But God it woot, ther may no man embrace ¹⁵⁹
As to destreyne a thyng which that nature
Hath natureclly set in a creature.

Taak any bryd, and put it in a cage,
And do al thyn entente, and thy corage,
To fostre it tendrely with mete and drynke
Of allé deyntees that thou kanst bithynke,
And keepe it al so clenly as thou may,
Al though his cage of gold be never so gay,
Yethath this brid by twenty thousand foold
Levere in a forest, that is rude and coold,
Goon eté wormés and swich wrecched-
nesse ;

For ever this brid wol doon his bisynesse
To escape out of his cagè, if he may ;
His libertee this brid desirèth ay.

Lat take a cat, and fostre hym wel
with milk
And tendré flessch, and make his couche
of silk,

And lat hym seen a mous go by the wal,
Anon he weyeth milk, and flessch, and al,
And every deyntee that is in that hous,
Swich appetit he hath to ete a mous. ¹⁸⁰
Lo, heere hath lust his dominacioun,
And appetit fleemeth discrecioun.

A she-wolf hath also a vileyns kynde ;
The lewedesté wolf that she may fynde,
Or leest of reputacioun, that wol she take
In tymé whan hir lust to han a make.

Alle these ensamples speke I by thise
men

That been untrewé, and no thyng by
wommen ;

For men han ever a likerous appetit,
On lower thyng to parfourne hir delit ¹⁹⁰
Than on hire wyvès, be they never so faire,
Ne never so trewé, ne so debonaire ;
Flessch is so newé fangel, with meschaunce !
That we ne konne in no thyng han
plesaunce,

That sowneth into vertu, any while.

This Phebus, which that thoghte upon
no gile,

Deceyvéd was for al his jolitee,
For under hym another haddé shee,
A man of litel reputacioun,

Nat worth to Phebus in comparisoun ; ²⁰⁰
The moore harm is, it happeth ofté so,
Of which ther cometh muchel harm and wo.

And so bifel, whan Phebus was absent,
His wyf anon hath for hir lemman sent.
'Hir lemman?' certés this is a knavysch
speche !

Foryeveth it me, and that I yow biseche.

The wisé Plato seith, as ye may rede,
'The word moot nede accordé with the
dede' ;

If men shal tellé properly a thyng ²⁰⁹
The word moot cosyn be to the werkynge.
I am a boystous man ; right thus seye I,
Ther nys no differencé trewely

Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree,
If of hire body dishoneste she bee,
And a pouré wenche, oother than this,—
If it so be they werké both amys,—
But that the gentile in hire estaat above,
She shal be cleped his 'lady,' as in love ;
And for that oother is a pouré womman,
She shal be cleped his 'wenche,' or his
'lemman,' ²²⁰

And God it woot, myn owene deeré brother,
Men leyn that oon as lowe as lith that
oother.

Right so bitwixe a titleless tiraunt
And an outlawe, or a thief erraunt,
The same I seye, ther is no difference,—
To Alisaundré was toold this sentence,—
That for the tiraunt is of gretter myght
By force of meynee, for to sleen down right,
And brennen hous and hoom, and make
al playn,

Lo, therfore is he cleped a 'capitayn' ; ²³⁰
And for the outlawe hath but smal meynee,
And may nat doon so greet an harm as he,
Ne brynge a contree to so greet mescheef,
Men clepen hyman 'outlawe,' or a 'thief' ;
But for I am a man noght textueel,
I wol noght telle of textés never a deel ;
I wol go to my tale as I bigan.

Whan Phebus wyf had sent for hir lemman,
Anon they wroughten al hire lust volage.

The whité crowe that heeng ay in the
cage ²⁴⁵

^{207.} *The wise Plato*, quoted from Boethius,
Bk. iii. prose 12. Cp. General Prologue, ll. 742;
742.

Biheeld hirewerk and seyde never a word;
 And whan that hoom was come Phebus,
 the lord,
 This crowe sang 'Cokkow! Cokkow!
 Cokkow!'

'What! bryd,' quod Phebus, 'what
 song syngestow?

Ne were thou wont so myrily to synge
 That to myn herte it was a rejoysynge
 To heere thy voys? Allas! what song
 is this?'

'By God!' quod he, 'I syngc nat amys.
 Phebus,' quod he, 'for al thy worthynesse,
 For al thy beautee and thy gentillesse, ²⁵⁰
 For al thy song and al thy mynstralcy,
 For al thy waityng, blerid is thyn eye
 With oon of lilel reputacioun,
 Noght worth to thee as in comparisoun
 The montance of a gnat, so moote I thryve!
 For on thy bed thy wyf I saugh hym swyve.'

What wol ye moore? The crowe anon
 hym tolde

By saddé tokenes, and by wordés bolde,
 How that his wyf had doon hire lecherye,
 Hym to greet shame and to greet vileynye,
 And tolde hym ofte he saugh it with his
 eyen. ²⁶¹

This Phebus gan awayward for to wryen,
 And thoughte his sorweful herté brast
 atwo;

His bowe he bente, and sette ther-inne
 a flo,

And in his ire his wyf thanne hath he
 slayn,—

This is theffect, ther is namoore to sayn:
 Forsorwe of which he biak his mynstralcie,
 Bothe harpe, and lute, and gyterne, and
 sautrie,

And eek he brak his arwes and his bowe,
 And after that thus spak he to the crowe:

'Traitor,' quod he, 'with tonge of
 scorpioun ²⁷¹

Thou hast me broght to my confusioun.
 Allas! that I was wroght! why nere I
 deed?

O deeré wyf! O gemme of lustiheed!
 That were to me so sad, and eek so trewe,
 Now listow deed, with facé pale of hewe,
 Ful gyltéles,—that dorste I swere, y-wys!
 O rakel hand! to doon so foule amys.

O trouble wit! O iré, recchèles!
 That unavyséd smyteth giltéles! ²⁸⁰
 O wantrust! ful of fals suspeciou,
 Where was thy wit and thy discrecioun?
 O every man, be war of rakelnesse,
 Ne trowe no thyng withouten strong
 . witenesse.

Smyt nat to soone, er that ye witen why;
 And beeth avyséd wel and sobrelly,
 Er ye doon any execucioun
 Upon youre iré for suspeciou!

Allas! a thousand folk hath rakel ire
 Fully fordoon, and broght hem in the
 mire! ²⁹⁰

Allas! for sorwe I wol myselfen slee.'
 And to the crowe, 'O falsé thief!'
 seyde he,

'I wol thee quite anon thy falsé tale.
 Thou songc whilom lyk a nyghtyngale;
 Now shaltow, falsé thief, thy song forgon,
 And eek thy whité fether's everichon;
 Ne never in al thy lif ne shaltow speke;
 Thus shal men on a traytour been awreke.
 Thou, and thyn of-spryng, ever shul be
 blake,

Ne never sweeté noysé shul ye make, ³⁰⁰
 But ever crie agayn tempest and rayn,
 In tokenyng that though thee my wyf is
 slayn.'

And to the crowe he sturte, and that anon,
 And pulled his whité fether's everychon,
 And made hym blak, and refte hym all
 his song,

And eek his speche, and out at dore hym
 slong,

Unto the devel, which I hym bitake!
 And for this caas been allé crow's blake.

Lordynges, by this ensample I yow
 preye, ³⁰⁹

Beth war, and taketh kepé what I seye;
 Ne telleth never no man in youré lyf
 How that another man bath dight his wyf;
 He wol yow haten mortally, certeyn.
 Daun Salomon, as wisé clerkés seyn,
 Techeth a man to kepen his tonge weel;
 But as I seyde, I am noght textueel,
 But nathéles, thus taughté me my dame:

300. *noyse*, E. *voys*.

310. *I seye*, H⁴ *ye seye*.

326. *textueel*, H⁴ *texted (text) wel*.

'My sone, thenk on the crowe, on
 Goddès name ;
 My sone, keepe wel thy tonge and keepe
 thy freend ; ³¹⁹
 A wikked tonge is worsè than a feend ;
 Mysone, from a feend men may hem blesse ;
 My sone, God of his endelees goodnesse
 Wallèd a tonge with teeth and lippès eke,
 Formansholde hym avysè what he speeke ;
 My sone, ful oftè for to muchè speche
 Hath many a man been spilt, as clerkès
 teche,
 Bút for litel speche avysely
 Is no man shent, to speke generally.
 My sone, thy tongè sholdestow restreyne
 At allè tymes, but whan thou doost thy
 peyne ³³⁰
 To speke of God, in honour and preyere.
 The firstè vertu, sone, if thou wolt leere,
 Is to restreyne and kepè wel thy tonge ;
 Thus lernè children whan that they been
 yonge.
 My sone, of muchel spekyng yvele avysed,
 Ther lassè spekyng hadde ynough suffised,
 Comth muchel harm, thus was me toold
 and taught ;
 In muchel spechè synnè wanteth naught.
 Wostow wher-of a rakel tongè serveth ?
 Right as a swerd for-kutteth and forkerveth

An arm atwo, my deerè sone, right so
 A tongè kutteth freendshipe al atwo.
 A jangler is to God abhomynable.
 Reed Salomon, so wys and honourable,
 Reed David in his Psalmès, reed Senekke.
 My sone, speke nat, but with thyne heed
 thou bekke ;
 Dissimule as thou were deaf, if that thou
 heere
 A jangler speke of perilous mateere.
 The Flemyngseith, and lerne it if thee leste,
 That "litel janglyng causeth muchel
 rest." ³⁵⁰
 Mysone, if thou no wikked word hast seyde,
 Thee thar nat dredè for to be biwreyd ;
 But he that hath mysseyd, I dar wel sayn,
 He may by no wey clepe his word agayn.
 Thyng that is seyde is seyde, and forth it
 gooth,
 Though hym repente, or be hym leef or
 looth.
 He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd
 A tale of which he is now yvele apayd.
 Mysone, be war, and be noon auctour newe
 Of tidynges, wheither they been false or
 trewe ; ³⁶⁰
 Wher so thou come, amongès hye or lowe,
 Kepe wel thy tonge, and thenk upon the
 crowe.'

GROUP I

*Heere foloweth the Prologe of the Persons
 Tale*

By that the Maunciple hadde his tale
 al ended
 Thesonnè fro the south lyne was descended
 So lowè that he ne nas nat to my sighte
 Degreès nyne-and-twenty as in highte ;
 [Foure] of the klokke it was tho, as I gesse,
 For ellevene foot, or litel moore or lesse,
 My shadwe was at thilkè tyme, as there,
 Of swiche feet as my lengthè parted were
 In sixe feet equal of porporcioun.

1. *the Maunciple*. According to the notes of time some other tales must have intervened, and *Maunciple* is only the guess of the copyists.

5. *Foure*. The MSS. read *Ten*, which accords with neither line 4 nor line 72.

7. *as there, i.e.* in that latitude ; H *of the yere*.

Ther-with the moonès exaltacioun, ¹⁰
 I meene *Libra*, alwey gan ascende,
 As we were entryng at a thropès ende ;
 For which our Hoost, as he was wont togye,
 As in this caas, oure joly compaignye,
 Seyde in this wisè, 'Lordynges everichoon,
 Now lakketh us no talès mo than oon ;
 Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree ;
 I trowe that we han herd of ech degree.
 Almoost fulfilled is al myn ordinaunce ;
 I pray to God so yeve hym right good
 chaunce ²⁰
 That telleth this tale to us lustily.

10, 11. *the moonès exaltacioun, I meene Libra*. It seems best to suppose with Tyrwhitt that *the moonès* is a blunder for *Saturnes*, Taurus being the exaltation of the moon, and *Libra* of Saturn. H reads *In mena* for *I meene*. *In mene* (in the middle of) has been suggested as a possible reading.

'Sire Preest,' quod he, 'artow a vicary,
Or arte a Person? sey sooth, by thy fey!
Be wat thou be, ne breke thou nat oure
pley,
Forevery mansave thouhath toold histale.
Unbokele, and shewe us what is in thy
male;

For trewely, me thynketh by thy cheere,
Thou sholdest knytte up wel a greet
mateere.

Telle us a fable anon, for cokkés bones!'

This Persoun answerd al atones, ³⁰
'Thou getest fable noon y-toold for me,
For Paul, that writeth unto Thymothee,
Repreveþ hem that weyveth soothfast-
nesse,

And tellen fables and swich wrecched-
nesse.

Why sholde I sowen draf out of my fest,
Whan I may sowen whete, if that me lest?
For which I seye, if that yow list to heere
Moralitee and vertuous mateere,
And thanne that ye wol yeve me audience,
I wol ful fayn, at Cistés reverence, ⁴⁰
Do yow plesaucé leefful, as I kan;
But, trusteth wel, I am a southren man,
I kan nat geeste 'um, ram, ruf,' by lettre;
Ne, God woot, rym holde I but litel better;
And therefore, if yow list,—I wol nat
glose,—

I wol yow telle a myrie tale in prose,
To knytte up al this feeste, and make an
ende;

And Jhesu, for his gracé, wit me sende
To shewé yow the wey, in this viage,
Of thilké parfit, glorious pilgrymage, ⁵⁰
That highte Jerusalem celestial;
And if ye vouchésauf, anon I shal
Bigynne upon my tale, for whiche I preye
Telle youre avys. I kan no better seye.

'But nathélees this meditacioun
I putte it ay under correccioun
Of clerkés, for I am nat textuel.
I také but the sentencé, trusteth weel;
Therefore I make a protestacioun
That I wol stondé to correccioun.' ⁶⁰

Upon this word we han assented soone,

^{43.} *geeste*, etc., tell tales in alliterative metres like the northern poets.

^{58.} *the* (om. E) *s nience*, the meaning as opposed to the letter.

For as us seméd, it was for to doone,
To enden in som vertuous sentence,
And for to yeve hym space and audience;
And bedeoure Hoost hesholdé to hym seye
That allé we to telle his tale hym preye.

Oure Hoosté hadde the wordés for us
alle:

'Sire Preest,' quod he, 'now fairé yow
bifalle!

Sey wat yow list, and we wol gladly heere';
And with that word, he seyde in this
manere: ⁷⁰

'Telleth,' quod he, 'yours meditacioun;
But hasteth yow, the sonnè wole adoun.
Bieth fructuous, and that in litel space,
And to do wel, God sendé yow his grace.'

PARSON'S TALE

Heere bigynneth the Persouns Tale

JER. VI. *State super vias, et videte, et interrogate de semitis antiquis, quæ sit via bona, et ambulate in ea; et invenietis refrigerium animabus vestris.*

[75] Oure sweete Lord God of hevene,
that no man wole perisse, but wole that
we comen alle to the knoweleche of hym
and the blissful lif that is perdurable,
amonesteth us by the prophete Jeremie,
and seith in this wyse: 'Stondeth upon
the weyes, and seeth, and axeth of olde
pathes, that is to seyn of olde sentences,
which is the goode wey, and walketh in that
wey, and ye shal fynde refresshyng for
yours soules.'

Manye been the weyes espiituels that
leden folk to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and
to the regne of glorie; [80] of which weyes
ther is a ful noble wey, and a covenable,
which may nat fayle to man, ne to womman,
that thurgh synne hath mysgoon from the
righte wey of Jerusalem celestial, and this

Parson's Tale. The treatise on the Deadly
Sins and their cure which is wedged into this
account of Penitence is taken from the *Somme
de Vices et de Vertus* of Frère Lorens, a thirteenth
century writer. Chaucer's authorship of these
sections has been doubted, perhaps needlessly,
but the sermon is unmercifully long.

Jer. vi., v. 16.

^{75.} *that no man wole perisse*, who desires to
destroy no man.

wey is cleped penitence; of which man sholde gladly herkennen and enquire with al his herte to wyten what is penitence, and whennes it is cleped penitence, and in how manye maneres been the acciouns or werkynge of penitence, and how manye spesces ther been of penitence, and whiche thynges apertenen and bihoven to penitence, and whiche thynges destourben penitence.

Seint Ambrose seith that penitence is the pleynynge of man for gilt that he hath doon and namore to do any thyng for which hym oghte to pleyne; [85] and som doctour seith, 'Penitence is the waymentynge of man that sorweth for his synne, and pyneth hymself for he hath mysdoon.' Penitence with certeyne circumstances is verray repentance of a man that halt hym self in sorwe and oother payne for his gilt; and for he shall be verray penitent, he shal first biwaylen the synnes that he hath doon and stidefastly purposen in his herte to have shrift of mouthe and to doon satisfaccioun, and never to doon thyng for which hym oghte moore biwayle or to compleyne, and continue in goode werkes, or elles his repentance may nat availle; for, as seith Seint Ysidre, 'He is a japer and a gabber and no verray repentant that eftsoone dooth thyng for which hym oghte repente.' [90] Wepynge, and nat for to stynt to do synne, may nat avaylle; but natheleesmen shal hope that at every tyme that man falleth, be it never so ofte, that he may arise thurgh penitence, if he have grace; but certainly it is greet doute, for, as seith Seint Gregorie, unneth ariseth he out of his synne that is charged with the charge of yvel usage; and therefore repentant folk that stynte for to synne, and forlete synne er that synne forlete hem, hooly chirche holdeth hem siker of hire savacioun. And he that synneth and verrailly repenteth hym in his laste ende, hooly chirche yet hopeth his savacioun, by the grete mercy of oure Lord Jhesu Crist for his repentaunce; but taak the siker wey.

85. *shrift of mouthe*, verbal confession.

85. *Seint Ysidre*, St. Isidore.

[95] And now sith I have declared yow what thyng is penitence, now shul ye understonde that ther been thre acciouns of penitence. The firste accioun of penitence is that a man be baptized after that he hath synned. Seint Augustyn seith, 'But he be penytent for his olde synful lyf, he may nat bigynne the newe clene lif'; for certes, if he be baptized withouten penitence of his olde gilt, he receyveth the mark of baptesme, but nat the grace, ne the remission of his synnes, til he have repentance verray. Another defeaute is this, that men doon deedly synne after that they han receyved baptesme. [100] The thridde defeaute is that men fallen in venial synnes after hir baptesme fro day to day. Ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that penitence of goode and humble folk is the penitence of every day.

The spesces of penitence been thre. That oon of hem is solempne, another is commune, and the thridde is privee. Thilke penance that is solempne is in two maneres; as to be put out of hooly chirche in Lente for slaughtre of children, and swich maner thyng. Another thyng is whan a man hath synned openly, of which synne the fame is openly spoken in the contree, and thanne hooly chirche by juggement destreyneth hym for to do open penaunce. [105] Commune penaunce is that preestes enjoynen men in certeyn caas, as for to goon peraventure naked in pilgrimages, or bare-foot. Pryvee penaunce is thilke that men doon alday for privee synnes, of whiche they shryve hem prively, and receyve privee penaunce.

Now shaltow understande what is bihovely and necessarie to verray perfit penitence. And this stant on thre thynges: Contricioun of herte, Confessioun of mouth, and Satisfaccioun; for which seith Seint John Crisostom, 'Penitence destreyneth a man to accepte benygely every payne that hym is enjoyned with contricioun of herte, and shrift of mouth, with satisfaccioun, and in werkynge of alle manere humylitee'; [110] and this is

105. *naked*, i.e. without upper garments.

fruytful penitence agayn thre thynges in whiche we wratthe oure Lord Jhesu Crist. This is to seyn, by delit in thynkyng, by recchelesnesse in spekyng, and by wikked synful werkynge; and agayns thise wikkede giltes is penitence, that may be likned unto a tree.

The roote of this tree is contricioun, that hideth hym in the herte of hym that is verray repentaunt, right as the roote of a tree hydeth hym in the erthe. Of the roote of contricioun spryngeth a stalke, that bereth braunches and leues of confessioun, and fruyt of satisfaccioun. [115] For which Crist seith in his gospel, 'Dooth digne fruyt of penitence'; for by this fruyt may men knowe this tree, and nat by the roote that is hyd in the herte of man, ne by the braunches, ne by the leues of confessioun; and therfore oure Lord Jhesu Crist seith thus, 'By the fruyt of hem ye shul knywen hem.' Of this roote eek spryngeth a seed of grace, the which seed is mooder of sikerness, and this seed is egre and hoot. The grace of this seed spryngeth of God thurgh remembrance of the day of doome and on the peynes of helle. Of this matere seith Salomon, that in the diede of God man forleteth his synne. [120] The heete of this seed is the love of God, and the desiryng of the joye perdurable. This heete draweth the herte of a man to God, and dooth hym haten his synne; for soothly ther is no thyng that savoureth so wel to a child as the milk of his norice, ne no thyng moore abhominable than thilke milk when it is medled with oother mete. Right so the synful man that loveth his synne, hym semeth that it is to him moost sweete of any thyng; but fro that tyme that he loveth sadly oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and desireth the lif perdurable, ther nys to him no thyng moore abhominable; [125] for soothly the lawe of God is the love of God. For which David the prophete seith, 'I have loved thy lawe, and hated wikkednesse and hate; he that loveth God kepeth his lawe and his word.' This tree saugh

the prophete Daniel in spirit upon the avysoun of Nabugodonosor, when he conseiled hym to do penitence. Penaunce is the tree of lyf to hem that it receyven, and he that holdeth hym in verray penitence is blessed, after the sentence of Salomon.

In this penitence or contricioun man shal understonde foure thynges; that is to seyn, what is contricioun, and whiche been the causes that moeven a man to contricioun, and how he sholde be contrit, and what contricioun availleth to the soule. Thanne is it thus that contricioun is the verray sorwe that a man receyveth in his herte for his synnes, with sad purpos to shryve hym and to do penaunce, and nevermoore to do synne; [130] and this sorwe shal been in this manere, ay seith Seint Bernard; it shal been hevye and grevous, and ful-sharpe and poynant in herte. First, for man hath agilt his Lord and his Creatour, and moore sharpe and poynaunt for he hath agilt hys Fader celestial, and yet moore sharpe and poynaunt for he hath wrathed and agilt hym that boghte hym, which with his precious blood hath delivered us fro the bondes of synne, and fro the crueltee of the devel, and fro the peynes of helle.

The causes that oghte movee a man to contricioun been sexe. First, a man shal remembre hym of his synnes; but looke he that thilke remembraunce ne be to hym no delit by no wey, but greet shame and sorwe for his gilt; for Job seith, synful men doon werkes worthy of confessioun. [135] And therfore seith Ezechie, 'I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lyf in bitternesse of myn herte.' And God seith in the Apocalipse, 'Remembreth yow fro whennes that ye been falle'; for biforn that tyme that ye synned ye were the children of God, and lymes of the regne of God; but for youre synne ye been woxen thral and foul, and membres of the feend, hate of aungels,

125. in spirit upon the avysoun of, E in the avysoun of the kyng.

125. Nabugodonosor, Nebuchadnezzar.

sclaunde of hooly chirche, and foode of the false serpent, perpetueel matere of the fir of helle; and yet moore foul and abhomyable, for ye trespassen so ofte tyme as dooth the hound that retourneth to eten his spewing; and yet be ye fouler for youre longe continuyng in synne and youre synful usage, for which ye be roten in youre synne as a beest in his dong. [140] Swiche manere of thoghtes maken a man to have shame of his synne and no delit, as God seith by the prophete Ezechiel, 'Ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes and they shuln displese yow.' Soothly synnes been the weyes that leden folk to helle.

The seconde cause that oghte make a man to have desdayn of synne is this, that, as seith Seint Peter, 'Who-so that dooth synne is thral of synne'; and synne put a man in greet thraldom, and therefore seith the prophete Ezechiel, 'I wente sorweful in desdayn of my self'; and certes, wel oghte a man have desdayn of synne and withdrawe hym from that thraldom and vileyny. And lo, what seith Seneca in this matere? He seith thus: 'Though I wiste that God—neither God ne man—ne sholde never knowe it, yet wolde I have desdayn for to do synne.' [145] And the same Seneca also seith, 'I am born to gretter thynges than to be thral to my body, or than for to maken of my body a thral'; ne a fouler thral may no man ne womman maken of his body than for to yeven his body to synne. Al were it the fouleste cherl, or the fouleste womman that lyveth, and leest of value, yet is he thanne moore foule and moore in servitute. Ever fro the hyer degree that man falleth, the moore is he thral, and moore to God and to the world vile and abhomyable. O goode God! wel oghte man have desdayn of synne, sith that thurgh synne ther he was free now is he maked bonde; [150] and therefore seyth Seint Augustyn, 'If thou hast desdayn of thy servant, if he agilte, or synne, have thou thanne desdayn that thou thyself sholdest do

synne; take reward of thy value, that thou ne be to foul to thyself.' Allas! wel oghten they thanne have desdayn to been servaunt and thralles to synne, and soore been ashamed of himself, that God of his endeles goodnesse hath set hem in heigh estaat, or yeven hem wit, strengthe of body, heele, beautee, prosperitee, and boghte hem fro the deeth with his herte blood, that they so unkyndely agayns his gentilesse quiten hym so vileynsly, to slaughtre of hir owene soules. [155] O goode God! ye wommen that been of so greet beautee, remembreth yow of the proverbe of Salomon, he seith, 'Likneth a fair womman that is a fool of hire body lyk to a ryng of gold that were in the groyn of a sowe, for right as a sowe wroteth in everich ordure, so wroteth hire beautee in the stynkyng ordure of synne.'

The thridde cause that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is drede of the day of doome and of the horrible peynes of helle; for as Seint Jerome seith, 'At every tyme that me remembreth of the day of doome, I quake, [160] for whan I ete, or drynke, or what so that I do, ever semeth me that the trompe sowneth in myn ere, "Riseth up, ye that been dede, and cometh to the juggement."' O goode God! muchel oghte a man to drede swich a juggement, ther as we shullen been alle, as Seint Poul seith, bifore the seete of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, wher as he shal make a general congregacioun, wher as no man may been absent, for certes there availleth noon essoyne, ne excusacioun. [165] And nat oonly that oure defaultes shullen be jugged, but eek that alle oure werkes shullen openly be knowe. And as seith Seint Bernard, 'Ther ne shal no pledynge availle, ne sleighte; we shullen yeven rekenynge of everich ydel word; ther shul we han a juge that may nat been deceyved ne corrupt.' And why? for certes alle oure thoghtes been discovered as to hym; ne for preyere, ne for meede, he shal nat been corrupt. And therefore

seith Salomon, 'The wratthe of God ne wol nat spare no wight for preyere ne for yifte'; and therefore, at the day of doom ther nys noon hope to escape.

Wherefore, as seith Seint Anselm, 'Ful greet angwyssh shul the synful folk have at that tyme. [170] Ther shal the stierne and wrothe juge sitte above, and under hym the horrible put of helle open to destroyen hym that moot biknowen his synnes, whiche synnes openly been shewed biforn God and biforn every creature; and in the left syde mo develes than herte may bithynke, for to harye and drawe the synful soules to the peyne of helle; and withinne the hertes of folk shal be the bitynge conscience, and withoute forth shal be the world al brennyng.' Whider shal thanne the wrecched synful man flee to hiden hym? Certes, he may nat hyden hym,—he moste come forth and shewen hym; for certes, as seith Seint Jerome, 'The erthe shal casten hym out of hym, and the see also, and the eyr also, that shal be ful of thonder clappes and lightnynges.'

[175] Now soothly, who so wel remembreth hym of thise thynges, I gesse that his synne shal nat turne hym to delit, but to greet sorwe, for drede of the peyne of helle. And therefore seith Job to God, 'Suffre, Lord, that I may awhile biwaille, and wepe, er I go withoute, returnyng to the derke lond, covered with the derknesse of deeth, to the lond of myse and of derknesse, where as is the shadwe of deeth, where as ther is noon ordre or ordinaunce, but grisly drede that ever shal laste.' Loo, heere may ye seen that Job preyde respit a while to biwepe and waille his trespas, for soothly oon day of respit is better than al the tresor of this world; and forasmuche as a man may acquiten hymself biforn God by penitence in this world, and nat by tresor, therefore sholde he preyde to God to yeve hym respit a while to biwepe and biwailen his trespas; [180] for certes, al the sorwe that a man myghte make fro the bigynnyng of the

world nys but a litel thyng at regard of the sorwe of helle.

The cause why that Job clepeth helle 'the lond of derknesse': understondeth that he clepeth it londe or erthe, for it is stable and never shal faille; dirk, for he that is in helle hath defaute of light material, for certes, the derke light that shal come out of the fyr that ever shal brenne shal turne hym al to peyne that is in helle, for it sheweth hym to the horrible develes that hym tormenten; 'covered with the derknesse of deeth'; that is to seyn, that he that is in helle shall have defaute of the sighte of God; for certes, the sighte of God is the lyf perdurable. [185] The 'derknesse of deeth' been the synnes that the wrecched man hath doon, whiche that destourben hym to see the face of God, right as dooth a derk clowde bitwixe us and the sonne. 'Lond of misese,' by-cause that ther been thre maneres of defautes agayn thre thynges that folk of this world han in this present lyf; that is to seyn, honours, delices, and riches. Agayns honour have they in helle shame and confusioun; for wel ye woot that men clepen honour the reverence that man doth to man; but in helle is noon honour ne reverence, for certes, namoore reverence shal be doon there to a kyng than to a knave. For which God seith by the prophete Jeremye, 'Thilke folk that me despisen shul been in despit.' [190] Honour is eek cleped greet lordshipe. Ther, shal no wight serven oother but of harm and torment. Honour is eek cleped greet dignytee and heighnesse, but in helle shul they been al fortroden of develes. And God seith, 'The horrible develes shulle goon and comen upon the hevedes of the dampned folk'; and this is forasmuche as the hyer that they were in this present lyf, the moore shulle they been abated and defouled in helle.

Agayns the riches of this world shul they han myse of poverté; and this

185. *despisen*, H *displezen*.

povertye shal been in foure thynges. In defaute of tresor, of which that David seith, 'The riche folk that embraceden and oneden al hire herte to tresor of this world, shul slepe in the slepyng of deeth, and no thyng ne shal they fynden in hir handes of al hir tresor.' And mooreover the myse of helle shal been in defaute of mete and drinke, [195] for God seith thus by Moyses, 'They shul been wasted with hunger, and the briddes of helle shal devouren hem with the bitter deeth, and the galle of the dragon shal been hire drynke, and the venym of the dragon hire morsels.' And forther-over hire myse shal been in defaute of clothyng, for they shulle be naked in body, as of clothyng, save the fyr in which they brenne, and othere filthes; and naked shul they been of soule, as of alle manere vertues which that is the clothyng of the soule. Where been thanne the gaye robes, and the softe shetes, and the smale shertes? Loo, what seith God of hem by the prophete Ysaye? That under hem shul been strawed motthes, and hire covertures shulle been of wormes of helle. And forther-over hir myse shal been in defaute of freendes, for he nys nat poure that hath goode freendes; but there is no frend; [200] for neither God, ne no creature, shal been frend to hem; and everich of hem shal haten oother with deedly hate. Thesones and the doghtren shullen rebellen agayns fader and mooder, and kynrede agayns kynrede, and chiden and despisen everich of hem oother bothe day and nyght, as God seith by the prophete Michias. And the lovyng children, that whilom loveden so fleshly everich oother, wolden everich of hem eten oother, if they myghte; for how sholden they love togidre in the peyne of helle, whan they hated ech of hem oother in the prosperitee of this lyf? For truste wel, hir fleshly love was deedly hate, as seith the prophete David, 'Whoso that loveth wikkednesse he hateth his soule'; [205] and whoso hateth his owne

soule, certes, he may love noon oother wight in no manere; and therfore in helle is no solas, ne no freendshipe, but ever the moore fleshly kynredes that been in helle, the moore cursynges, the more chidynges, and the moore deedly hate ther is among hem.

And forther-over they shul have defaute of alle manere delices; for certes delices been after the appetites of the five wittes, as sighte, herynge, smellynge, savorynge, and touchyng: [210] but in helle hir sighte shal be ful of derknesse and of smoke, and therfore ful of teeres, and hir herynge ful of waymentyng and of gryntyng of teeth, as seith Jhesu Crist. Hir nose-thirles shullen be ful of stynkyng stynk; and, as seith Ysaye the prophete, hir savoryng shal be ful of bitter galle; and touchyng of al hir body y-covered with fir that never shal quenche, and with wormes that never shul dyen, as God seith by the mouth of Ysaye. And forasmuch as they shul nat wene that they may dyen for peyne, and by hir deeth flee fro peyne, that may they understonden by the word of Job, that seith, 'Ther as is the shadwe of deeth.' Certes a shadwe hath the liknesse of the thyng of which it is shadwe, but shadwe is nat the same thyng of which it is shadwe. Right so fareth the peyne of helle; it is lyk deeth for the horrible angwissh; and why? For it peyneth hem ever as though they sholde dye anon, but certes, they shal nat dye, for as seith Saint Gregorie, 'To wrecche caytyves shal be deeth withoute deeth, and ende withouten ende, and defaute withoute failyng, [215] for hir deeth shal alwey lyven and hir ende shal evermo bigynne, and hir defaute shal nat faille'; and therfore seith Saint John the Evaungelist, 'They shullen folwe deeth and they shul nat fynde hym, and they shul desiren to dyc and deeth shal flee fro hem.'

And eek Job seith that in helle is noon ordre of rule, and al be it so that God hath creat alle thynges in right ordre and

no thyng withouten ordre, but alle thynges been ordeyned and nombred; yet nathelees, they that been dampned been no thyng in the ordre, ne holden noon ordre, for the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruyt, [220] for, as the prophete David seith, 'God shal destroye the fruyt of the erthe as fro hem, ne water ne shal yeve hem no moisture, ne the eyr no refresshyng, ne fyr no light.' For as seith Seint Basilie, 'The brennyng of the fyr of this world shal God yeven in helle to hem that been dampned, but the light and the cleernesse shal be yeven in hevене to his children, right as the goode man yeveth flessch to his children and bones to his houndes.' And for they shullen have noon hope to escape, seith Seint Job atte laste, that ther shal horreur and grisly drede dwellen withouten ende.

Horreur is alwey drede of harm that is to come, and this drede shal ever dwelle in the hertes of hem that been dampned; and therefore han they lorn al hire hope for sevene causes. [225] First, for God that is hir juge shal be withouten mercy to hem, and they may nat plesse hym ne noon of his halwes; ne they ne may yeve no thyng for hir raunsoun; ne they have no voys to speke to hym; ne they may nat fle fro peyne; ne they have no goodnesse in hem that they mowe shewe to deliver hem fro peyne. And therefore seith Salomon, 'The wikked man dyeth, and whan he is deed he shal have noon hope to escape fro peyne.' Whoso thanne wolde wel understande these peynes and bithynke hym weel that he hath deserved thilke peynes for his synnes, certes, he sholde have moore talent to siken and to wepe, than for to syngen and to pleye, for as that seith Salomon, 'Whoso that hadde the science to know the peynes that been establissed and ordeyned for synne, he wolde make sorwe.' [230] Thilke science, as seith Seint Augustyn, maketh a man to waymenten in his herte.

The fourthe point that oghte maken a

man to have contricioun is the sorweful remembraunce of the good that he hath left to doon heere in erthe, and eek the good that he hath lorn. Soothly, the goode werkes that he hath [left], outhur they been the goode werkes that he hath wrought er he fel into deedly synne, or elles the goode werkes that he wrought while he lay in synne. Soothly, the goode werkes that he dide biforn, that he fil in synne been al mortefied and astoned, and dilled, by the ofte synnyng. The othere goode werkes that he wrought while he lay in deedly synne, thei been outrely dede as to the lyf perdurable in hevене.

[235] Thanne thilke goode werkes that been mortefied by ofte synnyng, whiche goode werkes he dide whil he was in charitee, ne mowe never quyken agayn withouten verray penitence; and ther-of seith God by the mouth of Ezechiel, 'That if the rightful man returne agayn from his rightwisnesse and werke wikkednesse, shal he lyve? Nay, for alle the goode werkes that he hath wrought ne shul never been in remembrance, for he shal dyen in his synne.' And upon thilke chapitre seith Seint Gregorie thus: 'That we shulle understonde this principally, that whan we doon deedly synne it is for noght thanne to rehercen or drawn into memorie the goode werkes that we han wrought biforn'; [240] for certes, in the werkyng of the deedly synne ther is no trust to no good werk that we han doon biforn, that is for to seyn, as for to have therby the lyf perdurable in hevене; but nathelees, the goode werkes quyken agayn and comen agayn and helpen and availen to have the lyf perdurable in hevене whan we han contricioun. But soothly, the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne, forasmuch as they were doon in deedly synne, they may never quyke agayn; for certes, thyng that never halde lyf may never quykene; and nathelees, al be it that they ne availle noght to han the lyf perdurable,

yet availen they to abregge of the peyne of helle, or elles that God wole the rather enlunyne and lightne the herte of the synful man to have repentaunce. [245] And eek they availen for to usen a man to doon goode werkes that the feend have the lasse power of his soule. And thus the curteis Lord Jhesu Crist wole that no good werk be lost, for in somewhat it shal availle. But, forasmuche as the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in good lyf been al mortefied by synne solwyng, and eek sith that alle the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne been outrely dede, for to have the lyf perdurable, wel may that man that no good werk ne dooth synge thilke newe Frenshe song, '*Jay tout perdu—mon temps et mon labour.*'

For certes synne bireveth a man bothe goodnesse of nature and eek the goodnesse of grace; [250] for soothly, the grace of the Hooly Goost fareth lyk fyr that may nat been ydel, for fyr fayleth anon as it forleteth his wirkyng; and right so grace fayleth anon as it forleteth his werkynge. Then leseth the synful man the goodnesse of glorie that oonly is bihight to goode men that labouren and werken. Wel may he be sory thanne that oweth al his lif to God, as long as he hath lyved and eek as long as he shal lyve, that no goodnesse ne hath to paye with his dette to God, to whom he oweth al his lyf; for, trust wel, he shal yeven acountes, as seith Saint Bernard, of alle the goodes that han be yeven hym in this present lyf, and how he hath hem despendid; noght so muche that ther shal nat perisse an heer of his heed, ne a moment of an houre ne shal nat perisse of his tyme, that he ne shal yeve of it a rekenyng.

[255] The fifte thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is remembrance of the passioun that oure Lord Jhesu Crist suffred for oure synnes, for, as seith

Saint Bernard, 'Whil that I lyve I shal have remembrance of the travaillies that oure Lord Crist suffred in prechyng, his werynesse in travaylling, his temptaciouns whan he fasted, his longe wakynges whan he preyde, his teeres whan that he weepe for pitee of good peple, the wo and the shame and the filthe that men seyden to hym, of the foule spitting that men spitte in his face, of the buffettes that men yaven hym, of the foule mowes and of the repreves that men to hym seyden, of the nayles with whiche he was nayled to the croys, and of al the remenaunt of his passioun that he suffred for my synnes and no thyng for his gilt.'

[260] And ye shul understonde that in mannes synne is every manere of ordre or ordinaunce turned up-so-doun. For it is sooth that God and resoun and sensualitee and the body of man been ordeyned that everich of these foure thynges sholde have lordshipe over that oother; as thus: God sholde have lordshipe over resoun, and resoun over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man; but soothly, whan man synneth al this ordre or ordinaunce is turned up-so-doun. And therefore thanne, forasmuche as the resoun of man ne wol nat be subget ne obeisant to God, that is his lord by right, therefore leseth it the lordshipe that it sholde have over sensualitee, and eek over the body of man. [265] And why? For sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns resoun, and by that wey leseth resoun the lordshipe over sensualitee and over the body, for, right as resoun is rebel to God, right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to resoun and the body also.

And certes, this disordinaunce and this rebelloun oure Lord Jhesu Crist aboghte upon his precious body ful deere; and herkneth in which wise. For as muche thanne as resoun is rebel to God, therefore is man worthy to have sorwe and to be deed. This suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man, after that he hadde be bitraysed of his disciple, and distreyned

245. *thilke newe Frenshe song.* Quoted again in the *Fortune*, l. 7.

and bounde, so that his blood brast out at every nayl of his handes, as seith Seint Augustyn. [270] And forther-over for as muchel as resoun of man ne wol nat daunte sensualitee whan it may, therefore is man worthy to have shame, and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man whan they spetten in his visage. And forther-over for as muchel thanne as the caytyf body of man is rebel bothe to resoun and to sensualitee, therefore is it worthy the deeth, and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man upon the croys, where as ther was no part of his body free withouten greet payne and bitter passion.

And al this suffred Jhesu Crist that never forfeted, and therefore resonably may be said of Jhesu in this manere: 'To muchel am I payned for the thynges that I never deserved, and to muche defouled for shendshipe that man is worthy to have.' And therefore may the synful man wel seye, as seith Seint Bernard, 'Acursed be the bitternesse of my synne, for which ther moste be suffred so muchel bitternesse'; [275] for certes, after the diverse discordaunces of oure wikkednesses was the passion of Jhesu Crist ordeyned in diverse thynges, as thus; certes, synful mannes soule is bitraysed of the devel by coveitise of temporeel prosperitee, and scorned by deceite whan he cheseth fleshly delices, and yet is it tormented by incapience of adversitee, and by-spit by servage and subjeccioun of synne, and atte laste it is slayn fynally. For this disordinaunce of synful man was Jhesu Crist first bitraysed, and after that he was bounde that cam for to unbynden us of synne and of payne. Thanne was he by-scorned that oonly sholde han been honoured in alle thynges and of alle thynges. Thanne was his visage, that oghte be desired to be seyn of al mankynde, in which visage aungels desiren to looke, vileynsly bispet; [280] thanne was he scourged that no thyng hadde agilt; and finally thanne

275. *by-spit*, E. *dispeir*.

was he crucified and slayn. Thanne was acomplished the word of Ysaye, 'He was wounded for oure mysdedes and defouled by oure felonies.' Now, sith that Jhesu Crist took upon hymself the peyne of alle oure wikkednesses, muchel oghte synful man wepen and biwayle that for his synnes Goddes some of hevene sholde al this payne endure.

The sixte thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is the hope of thre thynges; that is to seyn, foryifnesse of synne, and the yifte of grace wel for to do, and the glorie of hevene, with which God shal gerdone a man for his goode dedes.

And, for as muche as Jhesu Crist yeveth us thise yiftes of his largesse, and of his sovereyn bountee, therefore is he cleped *Jhesus Nazarenus, rex Judeorum*. [285] *Jhesus* is to seyn saveour, or salvacioun, on whom men shul hope to have foryifnesse of synnes, which that is proprely salvacioun of synnes; and therefore seyde the aungel to Joseph, 'Thou shalt clepen his name Jhesus that shal saven his peple of hir synnes.' And heer-of seith Seint Peter, 'Ther is noon oother name under hevene that is yeve to any man by which a man may be saved,' but oonly Jhesus. *Nazarenus* is as muche for to seye as florissyng, in which a man shal hope that he that yeveth hym remissoun of synnes shal yeve hym eek grace wel for to do, for in the flour is hope of fruyt in tyme comyng, and in foryifnesse of synnes, hope of grace wel for to do. 'I was atte dore of thyn herte,' seith Jhesus, 'and cleped for to entre; he that openeth to me shal have foryifnesse of synne; [290] I wol entre into hym by my grace and soupe with hym (by the goode werkes that he shal doon, whiche werkes been the foode of God), and he shal soupe with me' (by the grete joye that I shal yeven hym).

Thus shal man hope for his werkes of penance that God shal yeven hym his regne, as he bihooteth hym in the gospel.

Now shal a man understonde in which

manere shal been his contricioun. I seye that it shal been universal and total. This is to seyn, a man shal be verray repentaunt for alle his synnes that he hath doon in delit of his thoght, for delit is ful perilous. For ther been two manere of consentynges; that oon of hem is cleped consentynge of affecciou, whan a man is moeved to do synne, and deliteth hym longe for to thyne on that synne, and his resoun aperceyeth it wel that it is synne agayns the lawe of God, and yet his resoun refreyneth nat his foul delit or talent, though he se wel apertly that it is agayns the reverence of God; although his resoun ne consente noght to doon that synne in dede, [295] yet seyn somme doctours that swich delit that dwelleth longe it is ful perilous, al be it never so lite. And also a man sholde sorwe namely, for al that ever he hath desired agayn the lawe of God with perfit consentynge of his resoun, for ther-of is no doute that it is deedly synne in consentynge; for certes, ther is no deedly synne that it nas first in mannes thought, and after that in his delit and so forth into consentynge, and into dede. Wherefore, I seye that many men ne repentten hem never of swiche thoghtes and delites, ne never shryven hem of it, but oonly of the dede of grete synnes outward; wherefore, I seye that swiche wikked delites and wikked thoghtes been subtil bigileres of hem that shullen be dampned.

[300] Moore-over, man oghte to sorwe for his wikkede wordes, as wel as for his wikkede dedes; for, certes, the repentaunce of a synguler synne, and nat repente of alle his othere synnes, or elles repentten hym of alle his othere synnes and nat of a synguler synne, may nat availle. For certes, God Almyghty is al good, and therefore he foryeveth al, or elles right noght. And heer-of seith Seint Augustyn, I wot certeynly that God is enemy to everich synnere, and how thanne he that observeth o synne, shal he have foryifnesse of the remenaunt of his othere synnes? Nay.

[305] And forther-over contricioun sholde be wonder sorweful and angwissous, and therefore yeveth hym God pleynly his mercy, and therefore 'whan my soule was angwissous with-inne me, I hadde remembrance of God, that my preyere myghte come to hym.' Forther-over contricioun moste be continueel, and that man havestedefast purpos to shryven hym, and for to amenden hym of his lyf; for, soothly, whil contricioun lasteth man may ever have hope of foryifnesse, and of this comth hate of synne, that destroyeth synne bothe in him-self and eek in oother folk, at his power; for which seith David, 'Ye that loven God, hateth wikkednesse,' for, trusteth wel, to love God is for to love that he loveth and hate that he hateth.

The laste thyng that man shal understonde in contricioun is this, 'Wher-of awayleth contricioun?' I seye that som tyme contricioun delivereth a man fro synne; of which that David seith, 'I seye,' quod David, that is to seyn, 'I purposed fermely to shryve me, and thow, Lord, relesedest my synne.' [310] And right so as contricioun availleth noght withouten sad purpos of shriste, if man have oportunittee, right so litel worth is shriste or satisfaccioun withouten contricioun. And moore-over contricioun destroyeth the prisoun of helle, and maketh wayk and fiblealle the strengthes of the develes, and restoreth the yiftes of the Hooly Goost and of alle goode vertues; and it clenseth the soule of synne and delivereth the soule fro the payne of helle, and fro the compaignye of the devel, and fro the servage of synne, and restoreth it to alle goodes espirituels, and to the compaignye and communoun of hooly chirche.

And forther-over it maketh hym that whilom was sone of ire to be sone of grace, and alle thise thynges been preved by hooly writ, and therefore he that wolde sette his entente to thise thynges, he were ful wys, for, soothly, he ne sholde nat

310. *entente*, H *herte*.

thanne in al his lyf have corage to synne, but yeven his body and al his herte to the service of Jhesu Crist, and ther-of doon hym hommage; [315] for soothly oure sweete Lord Jhesu Crist hath spared us so debonairly in our folics, that if he ne hadde pitee of mannes soule a sory song we myghten alle synge.

*Explicit prima pars penitentie. Et
sequitur secunda pars eiusdem*

The seconde partie of penitence is confessioun that is signe of contricioun. Now shul ye understonde what is confessioun, and wheither it oghte nedes be doon or noon, and whiche thynges been covenable to verray confessioun.

First shaltow understonde that confessioun is verray shewyng of synnes to the preest; this is to seyn 'verray,' for he moste confessen hym of alle the condiciouns that bilongen to his synne, as ferforth as he kan; [320] al moot be seyde and no thyng excused, ne hyd, ne for-wrapped, and noght avaunte thee of thy goode werkes. And forther-over it is necessarie to understonde whennes that synnes spryngen, and how they encreessen, and whiche they been.

Of the spryngynge of synnes seith Seint Paul in this wise, that 'Right as by a man synne entred first into this world, and thurgh that synne deeth; right so thilke deeth entred into alle men that synneden'; and this man was Adam, by whom synne entred into this world whan he brak the comaundementz of God. And therefore, he that first was so myghty that he sholde nat have dyed, bicam swich oon that he moste nedes dye, wheither he wolde or noon, and al his progenye in this world that in thilke man synneden.

[325] Looke, that in thestaat of innocence, whan Adam and Eve naked weren in Paradys and no thyng ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse, how that the serpent, that was moost wily of alle

othere beestes that God hadde maked, seyde to the womman, 'Why comaunded God to yow ye sholde nat eten of every trecein Paradys?' The womman answerde, 'Of the fruyt,' quod she, 'of the trees in Paradys we feden us, but soothly, of the fruyt of the tree that is in the myddel of Paradys God forbad us for to ete, and nat touchen it, lest peraventure we sholde dyen.' The serpent seyde to the womman, 'Nay, nay, ye shul nat dyen of deeth; for sothe, God woot that what day that ye eten ther-of youre eyen shul opene, and ye shul been as goddes, knowynge good and harm.'

The womman thanne saugh that the tree was good to feedyng, and fair to the eyen, and delitable to the sighte. She took of the fruyt of the tree, and eet it, and yaf to hire housbonde, and he eet, and anon the eyen of hem bothe opened; [330] and whan that they knewe that they were naked they sowed of fige leves a maner of breches, to hiden hire members.

There may ye seen that deedly synne hath first suggestioun of the fend, as sheweth heere by the naddre, and afterward the delit of the flessch, as sheweth heere by Eve, and after that the consentynge of resoun, as sheweth heere by Adam. For trust wel, though so were that the fend tempted Eve, that is to seyn the flessch, and the flessch hadde delit in the beautee of the fruyt defended, yet certes til that resoun, that is to seyn Adam, consented to the etynge of the fruyt, yet stood he in thestaat of innocence. Of thilke Adam tooke we thilke synne original, for of hym fleshly descended be we alle, and engendred of vile and corrupt mateere; and whan the soule is put in oure body, right anon is contract original synne, and that that was erst but only peyne of concupiscence is afterward both peyne and synne; [335] and therefore be we alle bornsones of wrathe and of dampnacioun perdurable, if it nere baptesme that we receyven, which bynyneth us the culpe. But for sothe the peyne dwelleth with us as to temptacioun, which peyne

highte concupiscence. And this concupiscence whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordeyned in man it maketh hym coveite by coveitise of flesh, fleshly synne by sighte of his eyen as to erthely thynges, and eek coveitise of hynesse by pride of herte.

Now, as for to speken of the firste coveitise, that is concupiscence after the lawe of oure membres that weren lawefulliche y-maked and by rightful juggement of God. I seye, forasmuche as man is nat obeisaunt to God, that is his Lord, therfore is the flesh to hym disobeisaunt thurgh concupiscence, which yet is cleped norrisynge of synne, and occasion of synne. Therfore al the while that a man hath in hym the peyne of concupiscence it is impossible but he be tempted somtime and moeved in his flesh to synne, [340] and this thyng may nat faille as longe as he lyveth. It may wel wexefieble and faille by vertu of baptesme, and by the grace of God thurgh penitence, but fully ne shal it never quenche, that he ne shal som tyme be moeved in hymself, but if he were al refreyded by siknesse, or by malefice of sorcerie, or colde drynkes. For lo, what seith Seint Paul, 'The flesh coveiteth agayn the spirit, and the spirit agayn the flesh; they been so contrarie and so stryven that a man may nat alwey doon as he wolde.' The same Seint Paul after his grete penaunce in water and in lond;—in water by nyght and by day, in greet peril and in greet peyne; in lond, in famyne, in thirst, in coold, and cloothlees, and ones stoned almoost to the deeth,—yet seyde he, 'Allas! I caytyf man, who shal deliver me fro the prisoun of my caytyf body?' [345] And Seint Jerome, whan he longe tyme hadde woned in desert, where as he hadde no compaignye but of wilde beestes, where as he ne hadde no mete but herbes, and water to his drynke, ne no bed but the naked erthe, for which his flesh was blak as an Ethiopeen for heete, and ny destroyed for coold, yet seyde he that the brennyng of lecherie

boyled in al his body; wherfore, I woot wel sykerly, that they been deceyved that seyn that they ne be nat tempted in hir body. Witnesse on Seint Jame the Apostel, that seith that every wight is tempted in his owene concupiscence, that is to seyn, that everich of us hath matere and occasioun to be tempted of the norissynge of synne that is in his body. And therfore seith Seint John the evaungelist, 'If that we seyn that we beth withoute synne, we deceyve us selve, and trouthe is nat in us.'

[350] Now shal ye understonde in what manere that synne wexeth and encreesseth in man. The firste thyng is thilke norissynge of synne of which I spak biforn, thilke fleshly concupiscence; and after that comth the subjeccioun of the devel, this is to seyn the develes bely, with which he bloweth in man the fir of fleshly concupiscence; and after that a man bithynketh hym wheither he wol doon, or no, thilke thing to which he is tempted. And thanne, if that a man withstonde and weyve the firste entisyng of his flesh, and of the seend, thanne is it no synne; and if it so be that he do nat so, thanne feeleth he anon a flambe of delit, and thanne is it good to be war and kepen hym wel, or elles he wol falle anon into consentynge of synne; and thanne wol he do it, if he may have tyme and place. [355] And of this matere seith Moyses, by the devel, in this manere: The feend seith, 'I wole chace and pursue the man by wikked suggestioun, and I wole hente hym by moevynge and stiryng of synne; I wol departe my prise, or my praye, by deliberacioun, and my lust shal been accompliced in delit; I wol drawe my swerd in consentynge,'—for certes, right as a swerd departeth a thyng in two peces, right so consentynge departeth God fro man,—'and thanne wol I sleen hym with myn hand in dede of synne'; thus seith the feend; for certes, thanne is a man al deed in soule. And thus is synne accompliced

by temptacioun, by delit, and by consentynge, and thanne is the synne cleped actueel.

Forsothe synne is in two maneres, outhur it is venial, or deedly synne. Soothly, whan man loveth any creature moore than Jhesu Crist oure Creatour, thanne is it deedly synne. And venial synne is it, if man love Jhesu Crist lasse than hym oughte. Forsothe the dede of this venial synne is ful perilous, for it amenuseth the love that men sholde han to God moore and moore. [366] And therfore if a man charge hymself with manye swiche venial synnes, certes, but if so be that he som tyme discharge hym of hem by shrifte, they mowe ful lightly amenuse in hym al the love that he hath to Jhesu Crist; and in this wise skippeth venial into deedly synne, for certes, the moore that a man chargeth his soule with venial synne, the moore is he enclyned to fallen into deedly synne. And therfore lat us nat be negligent to deschargen us of venial synnes, for the proverbe seith that 'manye smale maken a greet.' And herkne this ensample; a greet wawe of the see comth somtyme with so greet a violence that it drencheth the shipe; and the same harm dooth som tyme the smale dropes of water that entren thurgh a litel crevace into the thurrok, and in the botme of the shipe, if men be so negligent that they ne discharge hem nat by tyme. And therfore, although ther be a difference bitwixe thise two causes of drenchynge, algates the shipe is dreynt. [365] Right so fareth it somtyme of deedly synne, and of anoyouse veniale synnes, whan they multiplie in a man so greetly that thilke worldly thynges that he loveth, thurgh whiche he synneth venially, is as greet in his herte as the love of God, or moore. And therfore the love of every thyng that is nat biset in God, ne doon principally for Goddes sake, al though that a man love it lasse than God, yet is it venial synne, and deedly synne whan

the love of any thyng weyeth in the herte of man as muchel as the love of God, or moore. Deedly synne, as seith Seint Augustyn, is 'whan a man turneth his herte fro God, which that is verray sovereyn bountee, that may nat chaunge, and yeveth his herte to thyng that may chaunge and flitte'; and certes, that is every thyng, save God of hevene. For sooth is that if a man yeve his love, the which that he oweth al to God with al his herte, unto a creature, certes as muche as he yeveth of his love to thilke creature, so muche he bireveth fro God, [370] and therfore dooth he synne, for he that is dettour to God ne yeldeth nat to God al his dette, that is to seyn, al the love of his herte.

Now, sith man understondeth generally which is venial synne, thanne is it covenable to tellen specially of synnes whiche that many a man peraventure ne demeth hem nat synnes, and ne shryveth hem nat of the same thynges, and yet nathelees they been synnes. Soothly, as thise clerkes writen, this is to seyn, that at every tyme that a man eteth or drynketh moore than suffiseth to the sustenance of his body, in certain he dooth synne; and eek whan he speketh moore than nedeth it is synne; eke whan he herkneth nat benignely the compleint of the poure; eke whan he is in heele of body and wol nat faste whan hym oghte faste, withouten cause resonable; eke whan he slepeth moore than nedeth, or whan he comth by thilke enchesoun to late to chirche, or to othere werkes of charite; [375] eke whan he useth his wyf withouten sovereyn desir of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entente to yelde to his wyf the dette of his body; eke whan he wol nat visite the sike and the prisoner, if he may; eke if he love wyf or child, or oother worldly thyng, moore than resoun requireth; eke if he flatere or blandise moore than hym oghte, for any necessitee; eke if he amenuse or withdrawe the

370. *hym oghte, H⁶ other folk (other men).*

almesse of the poure; eke if he apparailleth his mete moore deliciously than nede is, or ete to hastily, by likerousnesse; eke if he tale vanytees at chirche, or at Goddes service, or that he be a talker of ydel wordes, of folye, or of vileynye,—for he shal yelden accounts of it at the day of doome; eke whan he biheteth or assureth to do thynges that he may nat perfourne; eke whan that he by lightnesse or folie mysseyeth or scorneth his neighebores; [380] eke whan he hath any wikked suspicioun of thyng ther he ne woot of it no soothfastnesse; thise thynges and mo withoute nombre been synnes, as seith Seint Augustyn.

Now shal men understonde that al be it so that noon erthely man may eschue alle venial synnes, yet may he refreyn hym by the brennyng love that he hath to our Lord Jhesu Crist, and by preyes and confessioun and othere goode werkes, so that it shal but litel greve; for, as seith Saint Augustyn, 'If a man love God in swich manere that al that ever he dooth is in the love of God, and for the love of God verrailly, for he brenneth in the love of God, looke, how muche that a drope of water that falleth in a fourneys ful of fyr anyeth or greveth, so muche anyeth a venial synne unto a man that is perfit in the love of Jhesu Crist.' [385] Men may also refreyn venial synne by receyvyng worthily of the precious body of Jhesu Crist; by receyvyng cek of hooly water, by almesdede, by general confessioun of *Confiteor* at masse, and at complyn, and by blessinge of bisshopes and of preestes and othere goode werkes.

Sequitur de septem peccatis mortalibus et eorum dependentiis et speciebus

Now is it bihovely thyng to telle

Sequitur de septem peccatis. At this point Chaucer begins to follow the *Somme de Vices et de Vertus* of Frère Lorens, altering, however, his arrangement, and with less close logical coherence.

whiche been the deedly synnes, this is to seyn chieftaynes of synnes. Alle they renne in o lees, but in diverse maneres. Now been they cleped chieftaynes, for as-muche as they been chief, and spryngen of alle othere synnes. Of the roote of thise sevene synnes thanne is pride, the general roote of alle harmes, for of this roote spryngen certein braunches, as ire; envye; accidie, or slewthe; avarice, or coveitise, to commune understandyng; glotony, and lecherye. And everich of thise chief synnes hath his braunches and his twigges as shal be declared in hire chapitres folwyng.

De Superbia

[390] And thogh so be that no man kan outrely telle the nombre of twigges and of the harmes that cometh of pride, yet wol I shewe a partie of hem, as ye shul understonde. Ther is inobedience, avauntinge, ypocrisie, despit, arrogance, inpuudence, swellynge of herte, insolence, clacioun, incipience, strif, contumacie, presumpcioun, irreverence, pertinacie, veyne gloie and many another twig that I kan nat declare. Inobedient is he that disobeyeth for despit to the comandementz of God and to his sovereyns and to his goostly fader. Avauntour is he that bosteth of the harm or of the bountee that he hath doon. Ypocrite is he that hideth to shewe hym swich as he is, and sheweth hym swich as he noght is. [395] Despitous is he that hath desceyn of his neighebores, that is to seyn of his evne Cristene, or hath despit to doon that hym oghte to do. Arrogant is he that thynketh that he hath thilke bountees in hym that he hath noght, or weneth that he sholde have hem by his desertes, or elles he demeth that he be that he nys nat. Inpuudent is he that for his pride hath no shame of his synnes. Swellynge of herte is whan a man rejoyseth hym of

385. as ire, etc. These are really treated separately, and not as branches of Pride.

harm that he hath doon. Insolent is he that despiseth in his juggement alle othere folk, as to regard of his value, and of his konnyng, and of his spekyng, and of his beryng. [400] Elacioun is whan he ne may neither suffre to have maister ne felawe. Inpacienc is he that wol nat been y-taught ne undernome of his vice, and by strif werreieth trouthe wityngly, and deffendeth his folye. Contumax is he that thurgh his indignacioun is agayns everich auctoritee or power of hem that been his sovereyns. Presumpcioun is whan a man undertaketh an emprise that hym oghte nat do, or elles that he may nat do, and this is called surquidie. Irreverence is whan men do nat honour there as hem oghte to doon, and waiten to be revered. Pertinacie is whan man deffendeth his folies, and trusteth to muchel in his owene wit. [405] Veyneglorie is for to have pompe and delit in his temporeel hynesse, and glorifie hym in this worldly estaat. Janglynge is whan men speken to muche biforn folk, and clappen as a mille, and taken no kepe what they seye.

And yet is ther a privee spece of pride that waiteth first to be saweled er he wole sawele, al be he lasse worth than that oother is, peraventure; and eek he waiteth or desireth to sitte, or elles to goon above hym in the way, or kisse pax, or been encensed, or goon to offryng biforn his neighebores, and swiche semblable thynges, agayns his duetee, peraventure, but that he hath his herte and his entente in swich a proud desir to be magnified and honoured biforn the peple.

Now been ther two maneres of pride. That oon of hem is withinne the herte of man and that oother is withoute, [410] of whiche soothly thise forseide thynges, and mo than I have seyde, apertenen to pride that is in the herte of man, and that othere spesces of pride been withoute;

405. *privee spece*, secret kind. This section is Chaucer's addition.

but natheles that oon of thise spesces of pride is signe of that oother, right as the gaye leefsel atte tavernne is signe of the wyn that is in the celer. And this is in manye thynges, as in speche and contenance, and in outrageous array of clothynge; for certes, if ther ne hadde be no synne in clothynge, Crist wolde nat so soone have noted and spoken of the clothynge of thilke riche man in the gospel. And as seith Seint Gregorie, 'That precious clothynge is cowpable for the derthe of it, and for his softenesse and for his strangenesse and degisynesse, and for the superfluitee, and for the inordinat scantnesse of it.'

[415] Allas! may men nat seen as in oure dayes the synful costlewe array of clothynge, and namely in to muche superfluite, or elles in to desordinat scantnesse?

As to the firste synne, in superfluitee of clothynge, which that maketh it so deere to harm of the peple, nat oonly the cost of embrowdyng, the degise, endentyng, baryng, owndyng, palyng, wyndyng or bendyng, and semblable wast of clooth in vanitee, but ther is also costlewe furring in hir gownes, so muche pownsonyng of chisel to maken holes, so muche daggyng of sheres; forth-with the superfluitee in lengthe of the forseide gownes, trailyng in the dong, and in the mire, on horse and eek on foote, as wel of men as of wommen, that al thilke trailyng is verrailly as in effect wasted, consumed, thredbare, and roten with dong, rather than it is yeven to the poure, to greet damage of the forseide poure folk. [420] And that in sondry wise; this is to seyn, that the moore that clooth is wasted, the moore it costeth to the peple for the scantnesse. And further-over if so be that they wolde yeven swich pownsoned and dagged clothynge to the poure folk, it is nat convenient to were for hire estaat, ne suffisant to beete hire necessitee

410. On the subject of clothes, Chaucer greatly expands his original.

to kepe hem fro the distemperance of the firmament.

Upon that oother side to speken of the horrible disordinat scantnesse of clothyng as been thise kuttid sloppes, or haynselyns, that thurgh hire shortnesse ne covere nat the shameful membres of man, to wikked entente. Allas ! somme of hem shewen the boce of hir shape, and the horrible swollen membres, that semeth lik the maladie of hirnias, in the wrappynge of hir hoses ; and eek the buttokes of hem faren as it were the hyndre part of a she ape in the fulle of the moone. [425] And mooreover the wrecched swollen membres that they shewethurgh the degisyng, in departynge of hire hoses in whit and reed, semeth that half hir shameful privee membres weren flayne. And if so be that they departen hire hoses in othere colours, as is whit and blak, or whit and blew, or blak and reed, and so forth, thanne semeth it as by variaunce of colour that half the partie of hire privee membres were corrupt by the fir of Saint Antony, or by cancre, or by oother swich meschaunce. Of the hyndre part of hir buttokes it is ful horrible for to see, for certes, in that partie of hir body ther as they purgen hir stynkynge ordure, that foule partie shewe they to the peple proudly in despit of honestitee, the which honestitee that Jhesu Crist and his freendes observede to shewen in hir lyve.

[430] Now of the outrageous array of wommen, God woot that though the visages of somme of hem seme ful chaast and debonaire, yet notifie they in hire array of atyr likerousnesse and pride. I sey nat that honestitee in clothyng of man or womman is uncovenable, but certes the superfluitee or disordinat scantitee of clothyng is reprevable. Also the synne of aornement, or of apparaille, is in thynges that apertenen to ridynge,—as in to manye delicat horses that been hoolden for delit, that been so faire, fatte, and costlewe, and also to

many a vicious knave that is sustened by cause of hem ; in to curious harneys, as in sadeles, in crouperes, peytrels, and bridles covered with precious clothyng, and riche barres, and plates of gold, and of silver ; for which God seith, by Zakarie the prophete, 'I wol confounde the riders of swiche horses.' [435] This folk taken litel reward of the ridynge of Goddes sone of hevene and of his harneys whan he rood upon the asse, and ne hadde noon oother harneys but the poure clothes of his disciples, ne we ne rede nat that ever he rood on oother beest. I speke this for the synne of superfluitee, and nat for resonable honestitee, whan reson it requireth.

And forther, certes, pride is greetly notified in holdynge of greet meynce whan they be of litel profit, or of right no profit ; and namely whan that meynce is felonous and damageous to the peple, by hardynesse of heigh lordshipe, or by wey of offices ; for certes, swiche lordes sellen thanne hir lordshipe to the devel of helle, whanne they sustenen the wikkednesse of hir meynce. [440] Or elles whan this folk of lowe degree, as thilke that holden hostelries, sustenen the thefte of hire hostilers, and that is in many manere of deceites. Thilke manere of folk been the flyes that solwen the hony, or elles the houndes that solwen the careyne. Swich forseide folk stranglen spiritually hir lordshipes, for which thus seith David the prophete, 'Wikked deeth moote come upon thilke lordshipes, and God yeve that they moote descenden into helle al doun, al doun ; for in hire houses been iniquitees and shrewednesses, and nat God of hevene.' And certes, but if they doon amendement, right as God yaf his benysoun to Pharao by the service of Jacob, and to Laban by the service of Joseph, right so God wol yeve his malisoun to swiche lordshipes as sustenen

440. *Pharao . . . Jacob.* All the seven MSS. have the names in this order, so it may be Chaucer's mistake.

the wikkednesse of hir servauntz, but if they come to amendement.

Pride of the table appeereth eek ful ofte; for certes, riche men been cleped to festes and poure folk been put away and rebuked. [445] Also in excesse of diverse metes and drynkes, and namely swiche manere bake-metes and dissh-metes, brennyng of wilde fir, and peynted and castelled with papir, and semblable wast, so that it is abusoun for to thyнке. And eek in to greet preciousnesse of vessel and curiositee of mynstralcie, by whiche a man is stired the moore to delices of luxurie. If so be that he sette his herte the lasse upon oure Lord Jhesu Crist, certeyn it is a synne; and certainly the delices myghte been so grete in this caas that man myghte lightly falle by hem into deedly synne.

The especes that sourden of pride, soothly, when they sourden of malice ymagined, avised, and forncast, or elles of usage, been deedly synnes, it is no doute; and when they sourden by freletee unavysed and sodeynly withdrawn ageyn, al been they grevous synnes, I gesse that they ne been nat deedly.

[450] Now myghte men axe wher-of that pride sourdeth and spryngeth, and I seye, somtyme it spryngeth of the goodes of nature, and somtyme of the goodes of fortune, and somtyme of the goodes of grace. Certes, the goodes of nature stonden outhir in goodes of body or in goodes of soule. Certes, goodes of body been heele of body, as strengthe, delivernesse, beautee, gentrie, franchise; goodes of nature of the soule been good wit, sharpe understondyng, subtil engyn, vertu natureel, good memorie; goodes of fortune been richesse, hyghe degrees of lordshipes, preisynges of the peple; [455] goodes of grace been science, power to suffre spiritueel travaille, benignitee, vertuous contemplacioun, withstondyng of temptacioun, and semblable thynges; of whiche forseyde goodes, certes, it is a ful greet folye a man to priden hym in

any of hem alle. Now as for to speken of goodes of nature; God woot that somtyme we han hem in nature as muche to oure damage as to oure profit. As for to speken of heele of body, certes, it passeth ful lightly, and eek it is ful ofte enchesoun of the siknesse of oure soule; for, God woot, the flessch is a ful greet enemy to the soule, and therefore the moore that the body is hool the moore be we in peril to falle. Eke for to pride hym in his strengthe of body, it is an heigh folye, for certes, the flessch coveiteth agayn the spirit, and ay the moore strong that the flessch is, the sorer may the soule be, [460] and over al this, strengthe of body and worldly hardynesse causeth ful ofte many a man to peril and meschaunce. Eek for to pride hym of his gentrie is ful greet folie, for ofte tyme the gentrie of the body binymeth the gentrie of the soule, and eek we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and alle we been of o nature, roten and corrupt, bothe riche and poure. Forsothe o manere gentrie is for to preise—that apparailleth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees and maketh hym Cristes child; for truste wel, that over what man that synne hath maistrie he is a verray cherl to synne.

Now been ther generale signes of gentillesse, as eschewyng of vice and ribaudye and servage of synne, in word, in werk, and contenance, [465] and usyng vertu, curteisye, and clenlesse, and to be liberal, that is to seyn, large by mesure, for thilke that passeth mesure is folie and synne. Another is to remembre hym of bountee that he of oother folk hath receyved. Another is to be benigne to his goode subgetis, wherfore seith Senek, 'Ther is no thing moore covenable to a man of heigh estaat, than debonairetee and pitee'; and therefore these flyes that men clepeth bees, whan they maken hir kyng, they chesen oon that hath no prikke wherwith he may styng.

Another is, a man to have a noble

herte, and a diligent to attayne to heighe vertuouse thynges. Now certes, a man to pride hym in the goodes of grace is eek an outrageous folie, for thilke yifte of grace that sholde have turned hym to goodnesse and to medicine, turneth hym to venym and to confusioun, as seith Seint Gregorie. [470] Certes also, who-so prideth hym in the goodes of fortune, he is a ful greet fool, for somtyme is a man a greet lord by the morwe, that is a caytyf and a wrecche er it be nyght; and somtyme the richesse of a man is cause of his deth; somtyme the delices of a man is cause of the grevous maladye thurgh which he dyeth. Certes, the commendacioun of the peple is somtyme ful fals and ful brotel for to triste,—this day they preyse, tomorwe they blame; God woot, desir to have commendacioun of the peple hath caused deeth to many a bisy man.

Remedium contra peccatum Superbie

[475] Now sith that so is that ye han understonde what is pride, and whiche been the spesces of it, and whennes pride sourdeth and spryngeth, now shul ye understonde which is the remedie agayns the synne of pride; and that is humylitee or mekenesse, that is a vertu thurgh which a man hath verray knoweleche of hymself, and holdeth of hymself no pris ne deyntee, as in regard of his desertes, considerynge ever his freletee.

Now been ther thre maneres of humylitee; as humylitee in herte, and another humylitee in his mouth, the thridde in his werkes.

The humilitee in herte is in foure maneres. That oon is whan a man holdeth hymself as noght worth biforn God of hevene. Another is, whan he ne despiseth noon oother man. [480] The thridde is whan he rekketh nat though men holde hym noght worth.

470. *Remedium*. In the *Somme de Vices*, etc., the remedies and the sins are kept apart. Chaucer brings each remedy after its sin.

The ferthe is whan he nys nat sory of his humiliacioun.

Also the humilitee of mouth is in foure thynges; in attempree speche, and in humblesse of speche; and whan he biknoweth with his owene mouth that he is swich as hym thynketh that he is in his herte; another is whan he preiseth the bountee of another man and no thyng therof amenuseth.

Humilitee eek in werkes is in foure maneres; the firste is whan he putteth othere men biforn hym; the seconde is to chese the loweste place over al; the thridde is gladly to assente to good conseil; the ferthe is to stonde gladly to the award of his sovereyns, or of hym that is in hyer degree. Certein this is a greet werk of humylitee.

Sequitur de Invidia

After pride wol I speken of the foule synne of envye, which is, as by the word of the philosophre, sorwe of oother mannes prosperitee; and after the word of Seint Augustyn, it is sorwe of oother mannes wele and joye of othere mennes harm. [485] This synne is platly agayns the Hooly Goost. Al be it so that every synne is agayns the Hooly Goost, yet nathelees for-as-muche as bountee aperteneth proprely to the Hooly Goost, and envye comth proprely of malice, therfore it is proprely agayn the bountee of the Hooly Goost.

Now hath malice two spesces, that is to seyn, hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse, or elles the flessch of man is so blynd that he considereth nat that he is in synne, or rekketh nat that he is in synne, which is the hardnesse of the devel.

That oother spece of malice is whan a man werreyeth trouthe, whan he woot that it is trouthe, and eek whan he werreyeth the grace that God hath yeve to his neigebore; and al this is by envye. Certes thanne is envye the worste synne that is; for soothly alle othere synnes been somtyme oonly agayns ospecial vertu,

but certes, envye is agayns alle vertues, and agayns alle goodnesse, for it is sory of alle the bountees of his neighbere; and in this manere it is divers from alle othere synnes; [490] for wel unnethe is ther any synne that it ne hath som delit in itself, save oonly envye, that ever hath in itself angwissh and sorwe.

The spesce of envye been thise; ther is first, sorwe of oother mannes goodnesse and of his prosperitee; and prosperitee is kyndely matere of joye; thanne is envye a synne agayns kynde. The seconde spesce of envye is joye of oother mannes harm; and that is proprely lyk to the devel, that ever rejoyseth hym of mannes harm.

Of thise two spesce comth bakbityng, and this synne of bakbityng, or detraccion, hath certeine spesce, as thus; som man preiseth his neighbere by a wikke entente, for he maketh alwey a wikked knotte atte laste ende, alwey he maketh a 'but' atte laste ende,—that is digne of moore blame than worth is al the preisyng. [495] The seconde spesce is that if a man be good, and dooth or seith a thing to good entente, the bakbiter wol turne all thilke goodnesse up-so-down, to his shrewed entente. The thridde is to amenuse the bountee of his neighbere. The fourthe spesce of bakbityng is this, that if men speke goodnesse of a man, thanne wol the bakbiter seyn, 'Pardee! swich a man is yet bet than he,' in dispreisyng of hym that men preise.

The fifte spesce is this, for to consente gladly and herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of oother folk; this synne is ful greet and ay encreeseth after the wikked entente of the bakbiter.

After bakbityng cometh grucchyng or murmuracioun, and somtyme it spryngeth of incapience agayns God, and somtyme agayns man.

[500] Agayns God it is whan a man grucbeth agayn the peynes of helle, or agayns poverté, or loss of catel, agayn reyn or tempest, or elles grucbeth that shrewes han prosperitee, or elles for that

goode men han adversitee; and alle thise thynges sholde men suffre patiently, for they comen by the rightful juggement and ordinance of God. Somtyme comth grucching of avarice, as Judas grucched agayns the Magdaleyne, whan she enoynte the heved of oure Lord Jhesu Crist with hir precious oynement. This maner murmure is swich as whan man grucbeth of goodnesse that hymself dooth, or that oother folk doon of hir owene catel.

Somtyme comth murmure of pride, as whan Simon the Pharisee grucched agayn the Magdaleyne, whan she approched to Jhesu Crist and weeped at his feet for hiresynnes. [505] And somtyme grucchyng souldeth of envye, whan men discovereth a mannes harm that was pryvee, or bereth hym on hond thyng that is fals.

Murmure eek is ofte amonges servantz, that grucchen whan hir sovereyns bidden hem doon leveful thynges; and, for-as-muche as they dar nat openly withseye the comaundementz of hir sovereyns, yet wol they seyn harm, and grucche and murmure prively, for verraydespit, whiche wordes men clepen 'the develes *Pater noster*,' though so be that the devel ne hadde never *Pater noster*, but that lewed folk yeven it swich a name. Somtyme grucchyng comth of ire, or prive hate that norisseth rancour in herte, as afterward I shal declare. [510] Thanne cometh eek bitternesse of herte, thurgh which bitternesse every good dede of his neighbor semeth to hym bitter and unsavory. Thanne cometh discord that unbyndeth alle manere of frendshipe. Thanne comth scornynge of his neighbor, al do he never so weel. Thanne comth accusyng, as whan man seketh occasioun to anoyen his neighbor, which that is lyk to the craft of the devel, that waiteth bothe nyght and day to accusen us alle. Thanne comth malignitee, thurgh which a man anoyeth his neighbor prively, if he may; and if he noght may, algate his wikked wil ne shal nat wante, as for to

505. *withseye*, contradict; H *withstonde*.
505. *folk . . . name*, H *men calle it so*.

brennen his hous pryvely, or empoysone or sleen his beestes, and semblable thynges.

[515] *Remedium contra peccatum Invidie*

Now wol I speke of the remedie agayns this foule synne of envye. First is the lovyng of God principal, and lovyng of his neighebor as hymself, for soothly that oon ne may nat been withoute that oother. And truste wel, that in the name of thy neighebor thou shalt understonde the name of thy brother; for certes alle we have o fader fleshly, and o mooder, that is to seyn, Adam and Eve; and eek o Fader espirituel, and that is God of hevene. Thy neighebor artow holden for to love and wilne hym alle goodnesse, and therfore seith God, 'Love thy neighebor as thyself'; that is to seyn, to salvacioun of lyf and of soule. And moore-over thou shalt love hym in word, and in benigne amonestyng and chastisyng, and conforten hym in his anyes, and preye for hym with al thyn herte. And in dede thou shalt love hym in swich wise that thou shalt doon to hym in charitee as thou woldest that it were doon to thyn owene persone; [520] and therfore thou ne shalt doon hym no damage in wikked word, ne harm in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule by entyssyng of wikked ensample; thou shalt nat desiren his wyf, ne none of his thynges. Understood eek, that in the name of neighebor is comprehended his enemy. Certes man shal loven his enemy by the comandement of God, and soothly, thy freend shaltow love in God. I seye, thyn enemy shaltow love for Goddes sake by his comandement; for if it were reson that a man sholde haten his enemy, forsothe God nolde nat receyven us to his love, that been his enemys.

Agayns thre manere of wronges that his enemy dooth to hym he shal doon thre thynges, as thus: [525] agayns hate and rancour of herte, he shal love hym in herte; agayns chidyng and wikkede

wordes, he shal preye for his enemy; and agayn wikked dede of his enemy, he shal doon hym bountee; for Crist seith, 'Loveth youre enemys, and preyeth for hem that speke yow harm, and eek for hem that yow chacen and pursewen, and dooth bountee to hem that yow haten.' Loo, thus comaundeth us oure Lord Jhesu Crist to do to oure enemys, for soothly nature dryveth us to loven oure freendes, and *parsey*, oure enemys han moore nede to love than oure freendes; and they that moore nede have, certes, to hem shal men doon goodnesse; and certes, in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Jhesu Crist that deyde for his enemys. And, in as muche as thilke love is the moore grevous to perfourne, in so muche is the moore gretter the merite, and therfore the lovyng of oure enemy hath confounded the venym of the devel; [530] for, right as the devel is disconfited by humylitee, right so is he wounded to the deeth by love of oure enemy. Certes thanne is love the medicine that casteth out the venym of envye fro mannes herte. The spesces of this paas shullen be moore largely in hir chapitres folwyng declared.

Sequitur de Ira

After envye wol I discryven the synne of ire; for soothly whoso hath envye upon his neighebor anon he wole comunly fynde hym a matere of wratthe in word, or in dede, agayns hym to whom he hath envye. And as wel comth ire of pride as of envye, for soothly he that is proude or envyous is lightly wrooth.

[535] This synne of ire, after the discryvyng of Seint Augustyn, is wikked wil to been avenged by word or by dede. Ire, after the philosopre, is the fervent blood of man y-quyked in his herte, thurgh which he wole harm to hym that he hateth. For certes, the herte of man, by eschawfyng and moevyng of his blood, wexeth so trouble that he is out of alle juggement of resoun.

But ye shal understonde that ire is in two maneres; that oon of hem is good and that oother is wikked. The goode ire is by jalousie of goodnesse, thurgh which a man is wrooth with wikkednesse, and agayns wikkednesse; and therfore seith a wys man, that ire is bet than pley. [540] This ire is with debonairetee, and it is wrooth withouten bitternesse, nat wrooth agayns the man, but wrooth with the mysdede of the man, as seith the prophete David, *Irascimini, et nolite peccare*.

Now understandeth that wikked ire is in two maneres, that is to seyn, sodeyn ire, or hastif ire withouten avisement and consentynge of resoun. The menyng and the sens of this is, that the resoun of man ne consente nat to thilke sodeyn ire; and thanne it is venial. Another ire is ful wikked, that comth of felonie of herte, avysed and cast biforn with wikked wil to do vengeance, and therto his resoun consenteth; and soothly this is deedly synne. This ire is so displeasnt to God that it troubleth his hous and chaceth the Hooley Goost out of mannes soule, and wasteth and destroyeth the liknesse of God, that is to seyn, the vertu that is in mannes soule, [545] and put in hym the liknesse of the devel, and bynymeth the man fro God that is his rightful lord. This ire is a ful greet plesaunce to the devel, for it is the develes fourneys that is eschawfed with the fir of helle. For certes, right so as fir is moore mighty to destroyen erthely thynges than any oother element, right so ire is myghty to destroyen alle spiritueel thynges.

Looke how that fir of smale gleedes, that been almoost dede under asshen, wollen quike agayn whan they been touched with brymston. Right so ire wol evermo quyken agayn whan it is touched by the pride that is covered in mannes herte; for certes, fir ne may nat comen out of no thyng, but if it were first in the same thyng naturelly, as fir is drawn out of flyntes with steel. [550] And, right so as pride is ofte tyme

matere of ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of ire. Ther is a maner tree, as seith Seint Ysidre, that whan men maken fire of thilke tree and covere the coles of it with asshen, soothly the fir of it wol lasten al a yeer or moore, and right so fareth it of rancour; whan it is ones conceived in the hertes of som men, certein it wol lasten peraventure from oon Estre day unto another Estre day and moore; but certes, thilke man is ful fer from the mercy of God in thilke while.

In this forseide develes fourneys ther foren thre shrewes: Pride, that ay bloweth and encreesseth the fir by chidyng and wikked wordes; [555] thanne stant Envy, and holdeth the hote iren upon the herte of man with a peire of longe toonges of long rancour; and thanne stant the synne of Contumelie or strif and cheeste, and batereth and forgeth by vileyns reprevynges. Certes, this cursed synne anyoeth bothe to the man hymself and eek to his neighebores. For soothly, almoost al the harm that any man dooth to his neighebores comth of wratthe; for certes, outrageous wratthe dooth al that ever the devel hym comaundeth: for he ne spareth neither Crist, ne his sweete mooder. And in his outrageous anger and ire, allas! allas! ful many oon at that tyme feelethe in his herte ful wikkedly both of Crist and of alle his halwes.

[560] Is nat this a cursed vice? Yis, certes. Allas! it bynymeth from man his wit and his resoun and al his debonaire lif spiritueel, that sholde kepen his soule.

Certes it bynymeth eek Goddes due lordshipe, and that is mannes soule and the love of his neighebores. It stryvethe eek alday agayn trouthe. It reveth hym the quiete of his herte and subverteth his soule.

Of ire comen thise stynkyng engendrures; first, hate, that is oold wratthe; discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde freend that he hath

lovede ful longe; and thanne cometh werre, and every manere of wrong that man dooth to his neighebores in body, or in catel. Of this cursed synne of ire cometh eek manslaughter, and understonde wel that homycide, that is manslaughter, is in diverse wise. Som manere of homycide is spiritueel, and som is bodily.

[565] Spiritueel manslaughter is in sixe thynges. First, by hate, as Seint John seith, 'He that hateth his brother is homycide.' Homycide is eek by bak-bitynge; of whiche bakbiteres seith Salomon, that they han two swerdes with whiche they sleen hire neighebores; for soothly as wikke is to bynyme his good name, as his lyf. Homycide is eek in yevynge of wikked conseil by fraude, as for to yeven conseil to areysen wrongful custumes and taillages, of whiche seith Salomon: 'Leoun rorynge and bere hongry been like to the cruel lordshipes in withholdynge or abreggyng of the shepe (or the hyre), or of the wages of servauntz, or elles in usures or in withdrawinge of the almesse of poure folk.' For which the wise man seith, 'Fedeth hym that almost dyeth for honger'; for soothly, but if thou feede hym, thou sleest hym. And alle these been deedly synnes. [570] Bodily manslaughter is whan thou sleest him with thy tonge in oother manere, as whan thou comandest to sleen a man, or elles yevest hym conseil to sleen a man.

Manslaughtre in dede is in four maneres. That oon is by lawe, right as a justice dampneth hym that is coupable to the deeth; but lat the justice be war that he do it rightfully, and that he do it nat for delit to spille blood, but for kepyng of rightwisenesse. Another homycide is that is doon for necessitee, as whan o man sleeth another in his defendaunt, and that he ne may noon ootherwise escape from his owene deeth; but certainly, if he may escape withouten manslaughter of his adversarie and sleeth hym, he dooth synne, and he shal bere

penance as for deedly synne. Eek if a man, by caas or aventure, shete an arwe, or caste a stoon, with which he sleeth a man, he is homycide. [575] Eek if a womman by negligence overlyeth hire child in hir slepyng, it is homycide and deedly synne. Eek whan man destourbeth concepcioun of a child, and maketh a womman outhere bareyne by drynkynge venemouse herbes thurgh which she may nat conceyve, or sleeth a child by drynkes, or elles putteth certeine material thynges in hire secree places to slee the child, or elles dooth unkyndely synne by which man or womman shedeth hire nature, in manere or in place ther as a child may nat be conceived, or elles if a woman have conceyved and hurt hirselfe, and sleeth the child, yet it is homycide. What seye we eek of women that mordren hir children for drede of worldly shame? Certes, an horrible homicide! Homycide is eek if a man approacheth to a womman by desir of lecherie, thurgh which the child is perished, or elles smytheth a womman wityngly, thurgh which she leseth hir child. Alle these been homycides and horrible deedly synnes.

[580] Yet comen ther of ire manye mo synnes, as wel in word, as in thoght and in dede, as he that arretteth upon God, or blameth God of thyng of which he is hymself guilty, or despiseth God, and alle his halwes, as doon these cursed hasardours in diverse contrees. This cursed synne doon they whan they feelen in hir hertes ful wikkedly of God and of his halwes; also whan they treten unreverently the sacrament of the auter,—thilke synne is so greet that unneth may it been releessed, but that the mercy of God passeth alle his werkes, it is so greet, and he so benigne.

Thanne comth of ire attrayng, whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrifte to forleten his synne, thanne wole he be angry and answeren hokerly and angrily, and deffenden or excusen

575. *by drynkes, E adds wilfully.*

his synne by unstedfastnesse of his flesh; or elles he dide it for to holde compaignye with his felawes; or elles he seith, the fend enticed hym; [585] or elles he dide it for his youthe; or elles his compleccioun is so corageous that he may nat forbere; or elles it is his destinee, as he seith, unto a certain age; or elles, he seith, it cometh hym of gentillesse of his auncestres; and semblable thynges. Alle this manere of folk so wrappen hem in hir synnes that they ne wol nat delivere himself; for soothly no wight that excuseth hym wilfully of his synne may nat been delivered of his synne, til that he mekely biknoweth his synne.

After this thanne cometh sweryng, that is expres agayn the comandement of God; and this bifalleth ofte of anger and of ire. God seith, 'Thow shalt nat take the name of thy Lord God in veyn,' or in ydel. Also oure Lord Jhesu Crist seith, by the word of Saint Mathew, 'Ne wol ye nat swere in alle manere; neither by hevene, for it is Goddes trone; ne by erthe, for it is the bench of his feet; ne by Jerusalem, for it is the citee of a greet kyng; ne by thyn heed, for thou mayst nat make an heer whit ne blak; [590] but seyeth by youre word, "ye, ye," and "nay, nay"; and what that is moore it is of yvel,' seith Crist. For Cristes sake, ne swereth nat so synfully, in dismembrynge of Crist by soule, herte, bones, and body; for certes it semeth that ye thynke that the cursede Jewes ne dismembred nat ynough the preciose persone of Crist, but ye dismember hym moore. And if so be that the lawe compelle yow to swere, thanne rule yow after the lawe of God in youre sweryng, as seith Jeremye, 4° c°, 'Thou shalt kepe thre condicions; 'thou shalt swere in trouthe, in doom, and in rightwisnesse'; this is to seyn, thou shalt swere sooth; for every lesyng is agayns Crist, for Crist is verray trouthe.

590. *dismembrynge*, i.e. the swearing by Christ's different members; cp. *Parson's Tale*, ll. 474, 475.

And thynk wel this, that every greet swerere, nat compelled lawefully to swere, the wounde shal nat departe from his hous whil he useth swich unleveful sweryng. Thou shalt sweren eek in doom, whan thou art constreyned by thy domesman to witnessen the trouthe. [595] Eek thow shalt nat swere for envye, ne for favour, ne for meede, but for rightwisnesse, and for declaracioun of it, to the worshipe of God, and helpyng of thyne evene Cristene. And therefore, every man that taketh Goddes name in ydel, or falsly swereth with his mouth, on elles taketh on hym the name of Crist, to be called a Cristene man, and lyveth agayns Cristes lyvyng and his techyng, alle they taken Goddes name in ydel.

Looke eek, what Saint Peter seith, *Actuum 4°*, *Non est aliud nomen sub celo*, etc.: 'Ther nys noon oother name,' seith Saint Peter, 'under hevene yeven to men, in which they mowe be saved'; that is to seyn, but the name of Jhesu Crist. Take kepe eek how that the name of Crist so precious is, as seith Saint Paul *ad Philipenses 2°*, *In nomine Jhesu*, etc.: that 'in the name of Jhesu every knee of hevenely creatures, or erthely, or of helle, sholden bowe'; for it is so heigh and so worshipful that the cursede feend in helle sholde tremblen to heeren it y-nempned. Thanne semeth it that men that sweren so horribly by his blessed name, that they despise hym moore booldely than dide the cursede Jewes, or elles the devel, that trembleth whan he heereth his name.

[600] Now certes, sith that sweryng, but if it be lawefully doon, is so heighly deffended, nuche worse is forsweryng falsly, and yet nedeless.

What seye we eek of hem that deliten hem in sweryng and holden it a gentrie or a manly dede to swere grete othes? And what of hem that of verray usage ne cesse nat to swere grete othes, al be the cause nat worth a straw? Certes, it is horrible synne. Sweryng sodeynly, withoute avysement, is eek a synne.

But lat us go now to thilke horrible sweryng of adjuracioun and conjuracioun, as doon these false enchauntours or nigromanciens, in bacyns ful of water, or in a bright swerd, in a cercle, or in a fir, or in a shulder-boon of a sheepe ! I kan nat seye but that they doon cursedly and damnablely agayns Crist, and al the feith of hooly Chirche.

[605] Whatseye we of hem that bileeven in diuynales, as by flight or by noyse of briddes, or of beestes, or by sort, by geomancie, by dremes, by chirkyng of dores, or crakyng of houses, bygnawynge of rattes, and swich manere wrecchednesse ? Certes, al this thyng is deffended by God, and by al hooly Chirche ; for which they been acursed til they come to amendement, that on swich filthe setten hire bileeve. Charmes for woundes or maladie of men, or of beestes, if they taken any effect, it may be peraventure that God suffreth it, for folk sholden yeve the moore feith and reverence to his name.

Now wol I speken of lesynges, which generally is fals significacioun of word, in entente to deceyven his evene Cristene. Some lesynge is, of which ther comth noon advantage to no wight ; and som lesynge turneth to the ese and profit of o man, and to disese and damage of another man. [610] Another lesynge is for to saven his lyf or his catel. Another lesynge comth of delit for to lye, in which delit they wol forge a long tale and peynten it with alle circumstaunces, where al the ground of the tale is fals. Som lesynge comth for he wole sustene his word ; and som lesynge comth of reccheleesnesse withouten avisement ; and semblable thynges.

Lat us now touche the vice of flaterynge, which ne comth nat gladly, but for drede, or for covetise. Flaterie is generally wrongful preisyng. Flatereres been the develes norices, that norissen his children with milk of losengerie. Forsothe Salomon seith that flaterie is wors than detraccioun, for somtyme detraction maketh an hauteyn man be the moore

humble, for he dredeth detraccioun ; but certes, flaterie, that maketh a man to enhancen his herte and his contenance. [615] Flatereres been the develes enchauntours, for they make a man to wene of hymself be lyk that he nys nat lyk ; they been lyk to Judas, that bitraysed [God, and these flatereres bitraysen] a man to sellen hym to his enemy, that is to the devel. Flatereres been the develes chapelleyens that syngen ever *Placebo*. I rekene flaterie in the vices of ire, for ofte tyme if o man be wrooth with another, thanne wole he flaterie som wight to sustene hym in his queuele.

Speke we now of swich cursynge as comth of irous herte. Malisoun generally may be seyde every maner power or harm. Swich cursynge bireveth man fro the regne of God, as seith Saint Paul. [620] And ofte tyme swich cursynge wrongfully retorneth agayn to hym that curseth, as a bryd that retorneth agayn to his owene nest. And over alle thyng men oghten eschewe to cursen hire children, and yeven to the devel hire engendrere, as ferforth as in hem is ; certes it is greet peril and greet synne.

Lat us thanne speken of chidyng and reproche, whiche been ful grete woundes in mannes herte, for they unsowen the semes of freendshipe in mannes herte. For certes, unnethes may a man pleynly been accorded with hym that hath hym openly revyld and reprieved in disclaundre. This is a ful grisly synne, as Crist seith in the gospel. And taak kepe now, that he that repreveth his neighbor, outhur he repreveth hym by som harm of peyne that he hath on his body, as, 'mesel !' 'croked harlot !' or by som synne that he dooth. [625] Now if he repreve hym by harm of peyne, thanne turneth the repreve to Jhesu Crist, for peyne is sent by the rightwys sonde of God, and by his suffrance, be it meselrie, or mayme, or maladie. And if he repreve hym uncharitably of synne, as 'thou

615. *I rekene flaterie*, etc., Chaucer's unhappy defence of the digression in the *Somme*.

dronkelewe harlot !' and so forth, thanne aperteneth that to the rejoysynge of the devel, that ever hath joye that men doon synne.

And certes chidyng may nat come but out of a vileyns herte, for after the habundance of the herte speketh the mouth ful ofte. And ye shul understonde that. Looke by any wey whan any man shal chastise another, that he be war from chidyng and reprevyng; for trewely, but he be war, he may ful lightly quyken the fir of angre, and of wratthe, which that he sholde quenche, and peraventure sleeth hym which that he myght chastise with benignitee. For as seith Salomon, 'The amiable tonge is the tree of lyf'; that is to seyn, of lyf espriteel, and soothly, a deslavee tonge sleeth the spirites of hym that repreveth and eek of hym that is reprevd. [630] Loo, what seith Seint Augustyn, 'Ther is no thyng so lyk the develes child as he that ofte chideth.' Seint Paul seith eek, 'A servant of God bihoveth nat to chide.' And how that chidyng be a vileyns thyng bitwixe alle manere folk, yet is it, certes, moost uncovenable bitwixe a man and his wyf; for there is never reste; and therefore seith Salomon, 'An hous that is uncovered in reyn and droppynge and a chidyng wyf been lyke.' A man that is in a droppynge hous in manye places, though he eschewe the droppynge in o place, it droppeth on hym in another place; so fareth it by a chidyng wyf; but she chide hym in o place, she wol chide hym in another; and therefore, 'Bette is a morsel of breed with joye than an hous ful of delices with chidyng,' seith Salomon. Seint Paul seith, 'O ye wommen, be ye subgetes to youre housbondes, as bihoveth in God, and ye men loveth youre wyves.' *Ad Colossenses* 3°.

[635] Afterward speke we of scornynge, which is a wikked synne, and namely whan he scorneth a man for his goode werkes; for certes, swiche scorneres faren

lyk the foule tode that may nat endure to smelle the soote savour of the vyne whanne it florisseth. Thise scorneres been partyng-felawes with the devel, for they han joye whan the devel wynneth, and sorwe whan he leseth; they been adversaries of Jhesu Crist, for they haten that he loveth, that is to seyn, salvacioun of soule.

Speke we now of wikked conseil, for he that wikked conseil yeveth is a traytour; he deceyeth hym that trusteth in hym, *ut Achitofel ad Absolonem*. But natheles yet is his wikked conseil first agayn hymself. [640] For, as seith the wise man, 'Every fals lyvyng hath his propertee in hymself, that he that wole anoye another man, he anoyeth first hymself.' And men shul understonde that man shal nat taken his conseil of fals folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk that loven specially to muchel hir owene profit; ne to muche worldly folk; namely in conseilynge of soules.

Now comth the synne of hem that sowen and maken discord amonges folk; which is a synne that Crist hateth outrely; and no wonder is; for he deyde for to make concord. And moore shame do they to Crist, than dide they that hym crucifiede; for God loveth bettre that freendshipe be amonges folk than he dide his owene body, the which that he yaf for unitee. Therefore been they likned to the devel, that ever been aboute to maken discord.

Now comth the synne of double tonge swiche as speken faire byforn folk and wikkedly bihynde, or elles they maken semblant as though they speke of good entencioun or elles in game and pley, and yet they speke of wikked entente.

[645] Now comth biwreying of conseil, thurgh which a man is defamed; certes, unnethe may he restooore the damage.

Now comth manace, that is an open folye, for he that ofte manaceth, he threteth moore than he may perfourne ful ofte tyme.

Now cometh ydel wordes, that is with-

outen profit of hym that speketh tho wordes, and eek of hym that herkneth tho wordes. Or elles ydel wordes been tho that been nedeles, or withouten entente of natureel profit. And al be it that ydel wordes been somtyme venial synne, yet sholde men douten hem, for we shul yeve rekenynge of hem bifore God.¹

Now comth janglynge, that may nat been withoute synne. And as seith Salomon, it is a synne of apert folye, [650] and therfore a philosophre seyde, whan men axed hym how that men sholde plesse the peple, and he answerde, 'Do manye goode werkes and spek fewe jangles.'

After this comth the synne of japeres, that been the develes apes, for they maken folk to laughe at hire japerie as folk doon at the gawdes of an ape. Swich japes defendeth Seint Paul. Looke, how that vertuouse wordes and hooly woordes conforten hem that travaillen in the service of Crist, right so conforten the vileyns wordes and knakkes of japeris hem that travaillen in the service of the devel. Thise been the synnes that comen of the tonge, that comen of ire, and of othere synnes mo.

Sequitur remedium contra peccatum Ire

The remedie agayns ire is a vertu that men clepen mansuetude, that is debonairetee, and eek another vertu that men callen pacience, or suffrance.

[655] Debonairetee withdraweth and refreyneth the stirynges and the moevynges of mannes corage in his herte, in swich manere that they ne skippe nat out by angre ne by ire.

Suffrance suffreth swetely alle the ayoaunces and the wronges that men doon to man outward. Seint Jerome seith thus of debonairetee, that it dooth noon harm to no wight, ne seith, ne for noon harm that men doon or seyn he ne eschawfeth nat agayns his resoun. This

^{650.} that is debonairetee, Cam. that Jhon de Bonania clepith debonarytee.

vertu som tyme comth of nature, for, as seith the philosophre, 'A man is a quyk thyng, by nature debonaire and tretable to goodnesse'; but whan debonairetee is enformed of grace, thanne is it the moore worth.

Pacience, that is another remedie agayns ire, is a vertu that suffreth swetely every mannes goodnesse, and is nat wrooth for noon harm that is doon to hym. [660] The philosophre seith that pacience is thilke vertu that suffreth debonairely alle the outrages of adversitee and every wikked word. This vertu maketh a man lyk to God, and maketh hym Goddes owene deere child, as seith Crist; this vertu disconfiteth thyn enemy, and therfore seith the wise man, 'If thou wolt venquysse thyn enemy, lerne to suffre.' And thou shalt understonde that man suffreth foure manere of grevances in outward thynges; agayns the whiche foure he moot have foure manere of paciences.

The firste grevance is of wikkede wordes; thilke suffrede Jhesu Crist withouten grucchyng, ful patiently, whan the Jewes despised and repreved hym ful ofte. Suffre thou therfore patiently; for the wise man seith, 'If thou stryve with a fool, though the fool be wrooth or though he laughe, algate thou shalt have no reste.'

[665] That oother grevance outward is to have damage of thy catel. Ther-agayns suffred Crist ful patiently, when he was despoyled of al that he hadde in this lyf, and that nas but his clothes.

The thridde grevance is a man to have harm in his body. That suffred Crist ful patiently in al his passioun.

The fourthe grevance is in outrageous labour in werkes. Wherefore I seye that folk that maken hir servantz to travaillen to grevously, or out of tyme, as on haly dayes, soothly they do greet synne. Heer-agayns suffred Crist ful patiently and taughte us pacience, whan he baar upon his blissed shulder the croys, upon which he sholde suffren despitous deeth.

Heere may men lerne to be pacient; for certes noght oonly Cristen men been pacient for love of Jhesu Crist and for gerdoun of the blisful lyf that is perdurable, but certes the olde payens that never were Cristene, commendedden and useden the vertu of pacience.

[670] A philosopre upon a tyme, that wolde have beten his disciple for his grete trespas, for which he was greetly amoeved, and broghte a yerde to scourge the child; and when this child saugh the yerde, he seyde to his maister, 'What thanke ye to do?' 'I wol bete thee,' quod the maister, 'for thy correccioun.' 'Forsothe,' quod the child; 'ye oghten first correcte youreself, that han lost al youre pacience for the gilt of a child.' 'Forsothe,' quod the maister, al wepynge, 'thow seyst sooth; have thow the yerde, my deere sone, and correcte me for myn inpacience.' Of pacience comth obedience, thurgh which a man is obedient to Crist and to alle hem to whiche he oghte to been obedient in Crist. [675] And understond wel that obedience is perfit whan that a man dooth gladly and hastily, with good herte, entierly, al that he sholde do. Obedience generally is to perfourne the doctrine of God and of his sovereyns, to whiche hym oghte to ben obeisaunt in alle rightwisnesse.

Sequitur de Accidia

After the synne of envye and of ire, now wol I speken of the synne of accidie; for envye blyndeth the heite of man, and ire troubleth a man, and accidie maketh hym heavy, thoughtful and wrawful. Envye and ire maken bitternesse in herte, which bitternesse is mooder of accidie and bynymeth hym the love of alle goodnesse. Thanne is accidie the angwissh of troubled herte; and Seint Augustyn seith, it is anoy of goodnesse and joye of harm. Certes this is a dampnable synne, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist, in as muche as it bynymeth the service that men oghte doon to Crist

with alle diligence, as seith Salomon. [680] But accidie dooth no swich diligence. He dooth alle thyng with anoy, and with wrawnesse, slaknesse, and excusacioun, and with ydelnesse, and unlust; for which the book seith, 'Accursed be he that dooth the service of God negligently.'

Thanne is accidie enemy to everich estaat of man; for certes the estaat of man is in thre maneres. Outher it is thestaat of innocence, as was thestaat of Adam biforn that he fil into synne; in which estaat he was holden to wirche, as in helyng and adowryng of God. Another estaat is estaat of synful men, in which estaat men been holden to labour in preiynge to God for amendement of hire synnes, and that he wole graunte hem to aysen out of hir synnes. Another estaat is thestaat of grace, in which estaat he is holden to werkes of penitence; and certes to alle thise thynges is accidie enemy and contrarie, for he loveth no bisynesse at al. [685] Now certes this foule sinne, accidie, is eek a ful greet enemy to the lifode of the body, for it ne hath no purveaunce agayn temporeel necessitee, for it forslaweth and forsluggeth, and destroyeth alle goodes temporeles by recchelesnesse.

The fourthe thyng is, that accidie is lyk to hem that been in the peyne of helle, by-cause of hir slouth and of hire hevynesse; for they that been dampned been so bounde that they ne may neither wel do, ne wel thynke. Of accidie comth first, that a man is anoyed and encombred for to doon any goodnesse, and maketh that God hath abhominacion of swich accidie, as seith Seint John.

Now cometh slouth, that wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce; for soothly, slouth is so tendre and so delicat, as seith Salomon, that he wol nat suffre noon hardnesse, ne penaunce, and therefore he shendeth al that he dooth. Agayns this roten-herted synne of accidie and slouth sholde men exercise himself to doon goode werkes, and manly and

685. *sinne, E swyn.*

vertuously cacchen corage wel to doon, thynkyng that oure Lord Jhesu Crist quitheth every good dede, be it never so lite. [690] Usage of labour is a greet thyng, for it maketh, as seith Seint Bernard, the laborer to have stronge armes, and harde synwes; and slouth maketh hem feble and tendre. Thanne comth drede to bigynne to werke anye goode werkes; for certes he that is enclined to synne, hym thynketh it is so greet an emprise for to undertake to doon werkes of goodnesse, and casteth in his herte that the circumstaunces of goodnesse been so grevous and so chargeaunt for to suffre, that he dar nat undertake to do werkes of goodnesse, as seith Seint Gregorie.

Now comth wanhope, that is despir of the mercy of God, that comth somtyme of to muche outrageous sorwe, and somtyme of to muche drede, ymaginyng that he hath doon so muche synne that it wol nat availlen hym, though he wolde repent hym and forsake synne; thurgh which despir or drede he abaundoneth al his herte to every maner synne, as seith Seint Augustin. [695] Which dampnable synne, if that it continue unto his ende, it is cleped synnyng in the Hooly Goost. This horrible synne is so perilous, that he that is despeired, ther nys no felonye ne no synne that he douteth for to do, as sheweth wel by Judas.

Certes, aboven alle synnes thanne is this synne moost displeant to Crist and moost adversarie.

Soothly, he that despeireth hym is lyke the coward champioun recreant that seith 'creaunt' withoute nede. Alas! alas! nedeles is he recreaunt and nedeles despeired. Certes, the mercy of God is ever redy to the penitent, and is aboven alle his werkes. [700] Allas! kan a man nat bithynke hym on the gospel of Seint Luc xv., where as Crist seith that as wel shal ther be joye in hevene upon a synful man that dooth penitence, as upon nynyety and nyne rightful men that never ne dede synne, ne neden no penitence.

Looke forther in the same gospel, the joye and the feeste of the goode man that hadde lost his sone, whan his sone with repentaunce was retourned to his fader. Kan they nat remembren hem eek, that, as seith Seint Luc xxiii., how that the theef that was hanged bisyde Jhesu Crist seyde, 'Lord, remembre of me, whan thou comest into thy regne.' 'Forsothe,' seyde Crist, 'Iseye to thee, to day shaltow been with me in paradys.' Certes, ther is noon so horrible synne of man that it ne may in his lyf be destroyed by penitence, thurgh vertu of the passion and of the deeth of Crist. [705] Allas! what nedeth man thanne to been despeired, sith that his mercy so redy is and large? Axe and have.

Thanne cometh sompnolence, that is slobby slombryng, which maketh a man be hevvy and dul in body and in soule. And this synne comth of slouth. And certes, the tyme that by wey of resoun men sholde nat slepe, that is by the morwe, but if ther were cause resonable; for soothly the morwe tyde is moost covenable a man to sey his preyer, and for to thynken on God, and for to honoure God, and to yeven almesse to the poure, that first cometh in the name of Crist. Lo, what seith Salomon? 'Whoso wolde by the morwe awaken and seke me, he shal fynde.' [710] Thanne cometh negligence or recchelesnesse, that rekketh of no thyng; and how that ignoraunce be mooder of alle harm, certes negligence is the norice. Negligence ne dooth no fors, whan he shal doon a thyng, wheither he do it weel or baddely.

Of the remedie of these two synnes, as seith the wise man, that he that dredeth God he spareth nat to doon that him oghte doon, and he that loveth God he wol doon diligence to plesse God by his werkes, and abaundone hymself, with al his myght, wel for to doon. Thanne comth ydelnesse that is the yate of alle harmes. An ydel man is lyk to a place that hath no walles; the develes may entre on every syde and sheten at hym at discovert,

by temptacion on every syde. [715] This ydelnesse is the thurrok of alle wikked and vileyns thoghtes and of alle jangles, truffles, and of alle ordure. Certes, the hevene is yeven to hem that wol labouren, and nat to ydel folk. Fek David seith, that they ne been nat in the labour of men, ne they shul nat been whipped with men, that is to seyn in purgatorie; certes thanne semeth it they shul be tormented with the devel in helle, but if they doon penitence.

Thanne comth the synne that men clepen *tarditas*, as whan a man is to laterede or tariynge, er he wole turne to God; and certes that is a greet folie. He is lyk to hym that falleth in the dych, and wol nat arise. And this vice comth of a fals hope, that he thynketh that he shal lyve longe; but that hope failleth ful ofte.

[720] Thanne comth lachesse; that is he that whan he biginneth any good werk, anon he shal forleten it, and stynten, as doon they that han any wight to governe and ne taken of hym namoore kepe, anon as they fynden any contrarie or any any. This be the newe shepherdes that leten hir sheepe wityngly go renne to the wolf, that is in the breres, or do no fors of hir owene governaunce. Of this comth poverté and destruccioun, bothe of spirituel and temporel thynges. Thanne comth a manere coolnesse, that freseth al the herte of a man. Thanne comth undevoicioun, thurgh which a man is blent, as seith Seint Bernard, and hath swich langour in soule, that he may neither rede ne singe in hooly chirche, ne heere, ne thynke of no devocioun, ne travaille with his handes in no good werk, that it nys hym unsavory and al apalled. Thanne wexeth he slough and slombry, and soone wol be wrooth, and soone is enclined to hate and to envye. [725] Thanne comth the synne of worldly sorwe, swich as is cleped *tristitia*, that sleeth man, as Seint Paul seith. For certes, swich sorwe werketh to the deeth of the soule and of the body also, for

ther-of comth that a man is anyed of his owene lif; wherefore swich sorwe shorteth ful ofte the lif of man, er that his tyme be come by wey of kynde.

Remedium contra peccatum Accidie

Agayns this horrible synne of accidie, and the branches of the same, ther is a vertu that is called *fortitudo*, or strengthe; that is, an affeccioun thurgh which a man despiseth anyouse thynges. This vertu is so myghty and so vigorous that it dar withstonde myghtily, and wisely k~~open~~ hym self fro perils that been wikked, and wrastle agayn the assautes of the devel; [730] for it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth it, and maketh it fieble; for this *fortitudo* may endure by long suffraunce the travailles that been covenable.

This vertu hath manye spes, and the firste is cleped magnanimité, that is to seyn greet corage; for certes ther bihoveth greet corage agains accidie lest that it ne swolwe the soule by the synne of sorwe, or destroye it by wanhope. This vertu maketh folk to undertake harde thynges and grevouse thynges by hir owene wil, wisely and resonably. And for as muchel as the devel fighteth agayns a man moore by queyntise and by sleighte than by strengthe, therfore men shal withstonden hym by wit and by resoun and by discrecioun.

Thanne arn ther the vertues of feith and hope in God, and in his seintes, to acheve and accomple the goode werkes, in the whiche he purposeth fermely to continue. [735] Thanne comth seuretee, or sikernes, and that is whan a man ne douteth no travaille in tyme comynge of the goode werkes that a man hath bigonne. Thanne comth magnificence, that is to seyn whan a man dooth and perfourneth grete werkes of goodnesse; and that is the ende why that men sholde do goode werkes; for in the accomplissynge of grete goode werkes lith the grete gerdoun. Thanne is ther con-

staunce, that is stablenesse of corage; and this sholde been in herte by stedefast feith, and in mouth, and in berynge, and in chiere, and in dede. Eke ther been mo speciale remedies agains accidie in diverse werkes, and in consideracioun of the peynes of helle, and of the joyes of hevene, and in trust of the grace of the Holy Goost, that wole yevc hym myght to perfourne his goode entente.

Sequitur de Avaricia

After accidie wol I speke of avarice and of coveitise, of which synne seith Seint Paule that the roote of alle harmes is coveitise. *Ad Thimotheum* vi. [740] For soothly, whan the herte of a man is confounded in itself, and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the confort of God, thanne seketh he an ydel solas of worldly thynges.

Avarice, after the descripcion of Seint Augustyn, is likerousnesse in herte to have erthely thynges. Som oother folk seyn that avarice is for to purchacen manye erthely thynges, and no thyng yeve to hem that han nede. And understood that avarice ne stant nat oonly in lond ne catel, but somtyme in science and in glorie, and in every manere of outrageous thyng is avarice and coveitise.

And the difference bitwixe avarice and coveitise is this; coveitise is for to coveite swiche thynges as thou hast nat, and avarice is for to withholde and kepe swiche thynges as thou hast withoute rightful nede. [745] Soothly this avarice is a synne that is ful dampnable, for al hooly writ curseth it, and speketh agayns that vice, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist; for it bireveth hym the love that men to hym owen, and turneth it bakward agayns alle resoun, and maketh that the avaricious man hath moore hope in his catel than in Jhesu Crist, and dooth moore observance in keypyng of his tresor than he dooth to service of Jhesu Crist. And therefore seith Seint Paul, *ad Ephesios* v., that an avaricious man is the thraldom of ydolatrie.

What difference is betwixe an ydolastre and an avaricious man? but that any ydolastre peraventure ne hath but o mawmet or two and the avaricious man hath manye; for certes, every floryn in his cofre is his mawmet. [750] And certes, the synne of mawmettrie is the firste thyng that God deffended in the ten comaundmentz, as bereth witness *Exodi* capitulo xx. 'Thou shalt have no false goddes bifore me, ne thou shalt make to thee no grave thyng.' Thus is an avaricious man that loveth his tresor biforn God an ydolastre, thurgh this cursed synne of avarice.

Of coveitise comen thise harde lordshipes thurgh whiche men been distreyned by taylages, custumes, and cariages, moore than hire duetec or resoun is; and eek they taken of hire bonde-men amercimentz, whiche myghten moore resonably ben cleped extorciouns than amercimentz. Of whiche amercimentz and raunsomyng of bondemen somme lordes stywardes seyn that it is rightful, for as muche as a cherl hath no temporeel thyng that it ne is his lordes, as they seyn; but certes thise lordshipes doon wrong that bireven hire bonde folk thynges that they never yave hem. *Augustinus de Civitate Dei*, libro ix. [755] Sooth is that the condicioun of thraldom and the firste cause of thraldom is for synne. *Genesis* ix.

Thus may ye seen that the gilt dis-serveth thraldom, but nat nature; wherfore thise lordes ne sholde nat mucche glorifien hem in hir lordshipes, sith that by natureel condicioun they been nat lordes of thralles, but that thraldom comth first by the desert of synne. And forther-over ther as the lawe seith that temporeel goodes of boonde folk been the goodes of hir lordshipes, ye, that is for to understonde, the goodes of the emperour, to deffenden hem in hir right, but nat for to robben

750. *the firste thyng.* The 1st and 2nd commandments were reckoned by the Roman Church as one, the 10th being divided.

hem ne reven hem. And therfore seith Seneca, 'Thy prudence sholde lyve benignely with thy thralles'; [760] thilke that thou clepest thy thralles been Goddes peple, for humble folk been Cristes freendes, they been contubernyal with the Lord.

Thynk eek that of swich seed as cherles spryngeth, of swich seed spryngen lordes. As wel may the cherl be saved as the lord; the same deeth that take the cherl, swich deeth taketh the lord; wherfore I rede, do right so with thy cherl as thou woldest that thy Lord dide with thee, if thou were in his plit. Every synful man is a cherl to synne. I rede thee, certes, that thou, lord, werke in swiche wise with thy cherles that they rather love thee than drede. I woot wel ther is degree above degree, as reson is, and skile it is that men do hir devoir ther as it is due; but certes, extorcions and despit of youre underlynges is dampnable.

[765] And forther-over understood wel that these conquerours, or tirauntz, maken ful ofte thralles of hem that been born of as roial blood as been they that hem conqueren. This name of thraldom was never erst kowth, til that Noe seyde that his sone Canaan sholde be thral to his bretheren for his synne. What seyde we thanne of hem that pilen and doon extorcions in hooly chirche? Certes, the swerd that men yeven first to a knyght, whan he is newe dubbed, signifieth that he sholde defenden hooly chirche, and nat robben it ne pilen it; and who so dooth is traitour to Crist. And, as seith Seint Augustyn, they been the develes wolves that stranglen the sheepe of Jhesu Crist, and doon worse than wolves; for, soothly, whan the wolf hath ful his wombe he stynteth to strangle sheepe, but soothly, the pilours and destroyours of Goddes hooly chirche ne do nat so, for they ne stynte never to pile.

[770] Now, as I have seyde, sith so is

765. *thraldom*, H² *cherldom*.

that synne was first cause of thraldom, thanne is it thus, that thilke tyme that al this world was in synne, thanne was al this world in thraldom and subjeccioun; but certes, sith the time of grace cam, God ordeyned that som folk sholde be moore heigh in estaat and in degree, and som folk moore lough, and that everich sholde be served in his estaat and his degree; and therfore in somme contrees, ther they byen thralles, whan they han turned hem to the feith, they maken hire thralles free out of thraldom. And therfore certes the lord oweth to his man that the man oweth to his lord. The pope calleth hymself servaunt of the servauntz of God; but for-as-muche as the estaat of hooly chirche ne myghte nat han be, ne the commune profit myghte nat han be kept, ne pees and reste in erthe, but if God hadde ordeyned that som men hadde hyer degree and som men lower, therfore was sovereyntee ordeyned to kepe and mayntene and defenden hire underlynges or hire subgetz, in resoun, as ferforth as it lith in hire power, and nat to destroyen hem ne confounde.

[775] Wherfore I seye, that thilke lordes that been lyk wolves that devouren the possessions or the catel of poure folk wrongfully, withouten mercy or mesure, they shul receyven, by the same mesure that they han mesured to poure folk, the mercy of Jhesu Crist, but if it be amended.

Now comth deceite bitwixe marchaunt and marchaunt. And thou shalt understonde that marchandise is in manye maneres; that oon is bodily, and that oother is goostly, that oon is honeste and leveful, and that oother is deshoneste and unleveful. Of thilke bodily marchandise that is leveful and honeste is this, that there as God hath ordeyned that a regne or a contree is suffisaunt to hym-self, thanne is it honeste and leveful that of habundaunce of this contree that men helpe another contree that is moore neddy; and therfore ther moote been marchantz

to bryngen fro that o contree to that oother hire marchandises.

[780] That oother merchandise, that men haunten with fraude and trecherie and deceite, with lesynges and false othes, is cursed and dampnable.

Espiritueel merchandise is proprely symonye, that is, ententif desir to byen thyng espiritueel, that is thyng that aperteneth to the seintuarie of God, and to cure of the soule. This desir, if so be that a man do his diligence to parfournen it, al be it that his desir ne take noon effect, yet is it to hym a deedly synne, and if he be ordred he is irreguleer. Certes symonye is cleped of Simon Magus, that wolde han boght for temporeel catel the yifte that God hadde yeven by the Hooly Goost to Seint Peter and to the Apostles. And therfore understood that bothe he that selleth, and he that beyeth thynges espiituels been cleped symonyals, be it by catel, be it by procurynge, or by flesshly preyere of his freendes, flesshly freendes, or espiituels freendes. [785] Flesshly in two maneres; as by kynrede, or othere freendes; soothly, if they praye for hym that is nat worthy and able, it is symonye, if he take the benefice; and if he be worthy and able ther nys noon.

That oother manere is whan a man or womman preyen for folk to avauncen hem oonly for wikked flesshly affeccoun that they have unto the persone, and that is foul symonye. But certes in service for which men yeven thynges espiituels unto hir servantz it moot be understonde that the service moot been honeste, and elles nat; and eek that it be withouten bargaynyng, and that the persone be able; for, as seith Seint Damasie, 'Alle the synnes of the world at regard of this synne arn as thyng of noght, for it is the gretteste synne that may be, after the synne of Lucifer and Antecrist'; for by this synne God forleseth the chirche and the soule that he boghte with his precious blood by hem that yeven chirches to hem that

been nat digne, [790] for they putten in theves that stelen the soules of Jhesu Crist and destroyen his patrimoyne. By swiche undigne preestes and curates han lewed men the lasse reverence of the sacramentz of hooly chirche, and swiche yeveres of chirches putten out the children of Crist, and putten into the chirche the develes owene sone. They sellen the soules that lambes sholde kepen, to the wolf that stranglenth hem; and therefore, shul they never han part of the pasture of lambes, that is the blisse of hevene.

Now comth hasardrie, with his apurtenaunces, as tables and rafles, of which comth deceite, false othes, chidynges, and alle ravynes, blasphemynge and reneinyng of God, and hate of his neighebores, wast of goodes, mysspendynge of tyme, and somtyme manslaughter. Certes, hasardours ne mowe nat been withouten greet synne whil thay haunte that crafte. [795] Of avarice comen eek lesynges, thefte, fals witness, and false othes; and ye shul understonde that thise been grete synnes, and expres agayn the comaundementz of God, as I have seyð. Fals witness is in word and eek in dede. In word, as for to bireve thy neighebores goode name by thy fals witnessyng, or bireven hym his catel or his heritage by thy fals witnessyng, whan thou for ire, or for meede, or for envye, berest fals witness, or accusest hym, or excusest hym, by thy fals witness, or elles excusest thyself falsly. Ware yow questmongeres and notaries. Certes, for fals witnessyng was Susanna in ful gret sorwe and payne, and many another mo. The synne of thefte is eek expres agayns Goddes heeste, and in two maneres, corporeel and espiituuel. Corporeel, as for to take thy neighebores catel agayn his wyl, be it by force or by sleight, be it by met or by mesure, [800] by stelyng eek of false enditementz upon hym, and in borwyng of thy neighebores catel, in entent never to payen it agayn, and semblable thynges.

Espiritueel thefte is sacrilege, that is to seyn, hurtyng of hooly thynges, or of thynges sacred to Crist, in two maneres ; by reson of the hooly place, as chirches or chirche-hawes, for which every vileyns synne that men doon in swiche places may be cleped sacrilege, or every violence in the semblable places. Also they that withdrawen falsly the rightes that longen to hooly chirche. And pleynty and generally, sacrilege is to reven hooly thyng fro hooly place, or unhooly thyng out of hooly place, or hooly thyng out of unhooly place.

Relevacio contra peccatum Avaricie

Now shul ye understonde that the releevynge of avarice is misericorde and pitee largely taken. And men myghten axe why that misericorde and pitee is releevynge of avarice. [805] Certes, the avaricious man sheweth no pitee ne misericorde to the nedeful man, for he deliteth hym in the keypyng of his tresor and nat in the rescowynge ne releevynge of his evene Cristene ; and therfore speke I first of misericorde.

Thanne is misericorde, as seith the philosophre, a vertu by which the corage of man is stired by the mysese of hym that is mysessed ; upon which misericorde folweth pitee in parfournynge of charitable werkes of misericorde. And certes, these thynges moeven a man to misericorde of Jhesu Crist, that he yaf hymself for oure gilt, and suffred deeth for misericorde, and foryaf us oure originale synnes, and therby releessed us fro the peynes of helle, and amened the peynes of purgatorie by penitence, and yeveth grace wel to do, and atte laste the blisse of hevene. [810] The spesces of misericorde been, as for to lene and for to yeve, and to foryeven and relesse, and for to han pitee in herte, and compassioun of the meschief of his evene Cristene, and eek to chastise there as nede is.

Another manere of remedie agayns avarice is resonable largesse, but soothly

heere bihoveth the consideracioun of the grace of Jhesu Crist and of his temporeel goodes, and eek of the goodes perdurables that Crist yaf to us, and to han remembrance of the deeth that he shal receyve, he noot whanne, where, ne how ; and eek that he shal forgon al that he hath, save oonly that he hath despended in goode werkes.

But, for as muche as som folk been unmesurable, men oughten eschue fool-largesse, that men clepen wast. Certes, he that is fool-large ne yeveth nat his catel, but he leseth his catel. Soothly what thyng that he yeveth for veyneglorie, as to mynstrals and to folk, for to beren his renoun in the world, he hath synne ther-of, and noon almesse. [815] Certes he leseth foule his good that ne seketh with the yifte of his good no thyng but synne. He is lyk to an hors that seketh rather to drynken drovy or trouble water, than for to drynken water of the clere welle. And for as muchel as they yeven ther as they sholde nat yeven, to hem aperteneth thilke malisoun that Crist shal yeven at the day of doome to hem that shullen been dampned.

Sequitur de Glut

After avarice comth glotony, which is expres eek agayn the comandement of God. Glotony is unmesurable appetit to ete or to drynke, or elles to doon ynogh to the unmesurable appetit and desordeyned coveitise to eten or to drynke. This synne corrupted al this world, as is wel shewed in the synne of Adam and of Eve. Looke, eek, what seith Seint Paul of glotony. [820] 'Manye,' seith Seint Paul, 'goon, of whiche I have ofte seyde to yow, and now I seye it wepyng, that been the enemys of the croys of Crist, of whiche the ende is deeth, and of whiche hire wombe is hire God, and hire glorie in confusioun of hem that so devouren erthely thynges.' He that is usaunt to this synne of glotony

820. *devouren, H³ saueren.*

he ne may no synne withstonde; he moot been in servage of alle vices, for it is the devels hoord ther he hideth hym and resteth.

This synne hath manye speses. The firste is dronkenesse, that is the horrible sepulture of mannes resoun, and therefore whan a man is dronken he hath lost his resoun, and this is deedly synne. But soothly, whan that a man is nat wont to strong drynke, and peraventure ne knoweth nat the strengthe of the drynke, or hath feblesse in his heed, or hath travailed, thurgh which he drynketh the moore, al be he sodeynly caught with drynke, it is no deedly synne, but venyal. The seconde spece of glotonye is, that the spirit of a man wexeth al trouble, for dronkenesse bireveth hym the discrecioun of his wit. [825] The thridde spece of glotonye is whan a man devoureth his mete, and hath no rightful manere of etynge. The fourth is, whan thurgh the grete habundaunce of his mete, the humours in his body been destempred. The fifthe is forgettelnesse by to muchel drynkyng, for which somtyme a man forgeteth er the morwe what he dide at even, or on the nyght biforn.

In oother manere been distinct the speses of glotonye, after Seint Gregorie. The firste is for to ete biforn tyme to ete; the seconde is whan a man get hym to delicaat mete or drynke; the thridde is whan men taken to nuche over mesure; the fourthe is curiositee with greet entente to maken and apparaillen his mete; the fifthe is for to eten to greedily. [830] Thise been the fyve syngres of the devels hand, by whiche he draweth folk to synne.

Remedium contra peccatum Gule

Agayns glotonye is the remedie abstinence, as seith Galien; but that holde I nat meritorie, if he do it oonly for the heele of his body. Seint Augustyn wole that abstinence be doon for vertu and with pacience. 'Abstinence,' he seith,

'is litel worth, but if a man have good wil ther-to, and but it be enforced by pacience and by charitee, and that men doon it for Godes sake, and in hope to have the blisse of hevene.'

The felawes of abstinence been attemperance, that holdeth the meene in alle thynges; eek shame, that eschueth alle deshonestee; suffisance, that seketh no riche metes ne drynkes, ne dooth no fors of to outrageous apparailynge of mete; mesure also, that restreyneth by resoun the deslavec appetit of etynge; sobrenesse also, that restreyneth the outrage of drynke; [835] sparynge also, that restreyneth the delicaat ese to sitte longe at his mete and softly, wherfore som folk stonden, of hir owene wyl, to eten at the lasse leyser.

Sequitur de Luxuria

After glotonye thanne comth lecherie, for thise two synnes been so ny cosyns, that ofte tyme they wol nat departe. God woot this synne is ful displeaunt thyng to God, for he seyde hymself, 'Do no lecherie'; and therfore he putte grete peynes agayns this synne in the olde lawe. If womman thral been taken in this synne, she sholde be beten with staves to the deeth; and if she were a gentil womman, she sholde be slayn with stones; and if she were a bisshoppes doghter, she sholde been brent, by Goddes comandement. Fortherover, by the synne of lecherie God dreynte al the world at the diluge, and after that he brente five citees with thonder leyt and sank hem into helle.

[840] Now lat us speke thanne of thilke stynkyng synne of lecherie that men clepe avowtrie of wedded folk; that is to seyn, if that oon of hem be wedded, or elles bothe. Seint John seith that avowtiers shullen been in helle in a stank brennyng of fyr and of brymston. In fyr for lecherie, in brymston for the stynk of hire ordure. Certes, the brekyng of this sacrament is an horrible thyng; it

was maked of God hymself in paradys, and confermed by Jhesu Crist, as witnesseth Seint Mathew in the gospel: 'A man shal lete fader and mooder and taken hym to his wif, and they shullen be two in o flessli.' This sacrament bitokneth the knyttyng togidre of Crist and of hooly chirche. And nat oonly that God forbad avowtrie in dede, but eek he comanded that thou sholdest nat coveite thy neighbores wyf. [845] In this heeste, seith Seint Augustyn, is forboden alle manere coveitise to doon lecherie. Lo, what seith Seint Mathew in the gospel; that who-so seeth a womman to coveitise of his lust, he hath doon lecherie with hire in his herte. Icere may ye seen that nat oonly the dede of this synne is forboden, but eek the desir to doon that synne.

This cursed synne anoyeth grevousliche hem that it haunten. And first to hire soule, for he obligeth it to synne and to payne of deeth that is perdurable. Unto the body anoyeth it grevously also, for it dreyeth hym, and wasteth, and shenteth hym, and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the feend of helle; it wasteth his catel and his substaunce. And certes if it be a foul thyng a man to waste his catel on wommen, yet is it a fouler thyng whan that for swich ordure wommen dispenden upon men hir catel and substaunce. [850] This synne, as seith the prophete, bireveth man and womman hir goode fame, and al hire honour, and it is ful plesaunt to the devel; for ther-by wynneth he the mooste partie of this world; and, right as a marchant deliteth hym moost in chaffare that he hath moost advantage of, right so deliteth the fend in this ordure.

This is that oother hand of the devel with five fynGRES to cacche the peple to his vileynye. The firste fynger is the fool lookynge of the fool womman, and of the fool man, that sleeth right as the basilicok sleeth folk by the venym of his sighte; for the coveitise of eyen folweth the coveitise of the herte. The seconde fynger is the vileyns touchynge in wikked

manere; and therfore, seith Salomon that whoso toucheth and handleth a womman he fareth lyk hym that handleth the scorioun that styngeth and sodeynly sleeth thurgh his envenymynge; as who-so toucheth warm pych, it shent his fynGRES. [855] The thridde is foule wordes, that fareth lyk fyr, that right anon brenneth the herte. The fourthe fynger is the kysynge; and trewely he were a greet fool that wolde kisse the mouth of a brennyng ovene, or of a fourneys. And moore foolles been they that kissen in vileynye, for that mouth is the mouth of helle; and namely thise olde dotardesholours, yet wol they kisse, though they may nat do, and smatre hem. Certes, they been lyk to houndes, for an hound whan he comth by the roser, or by othere [bushes], though he may nat pisse, yet wole he heve up his leg and make a contenance to pisse. And for that many man weneth that he may nat synne, for no likerousnesse that he dooth with his wyf, certes, that opinioun is fals; God woot a man may sleen hymself with his owene knyf and make hymselfen dronken of his owene tonne. [860] Certes, be it wyf, be it child, or any worldly thyng that he loveth biforn God, it is his mawmet, and he is an ydolastre. Man sholde loven his wyf by discrecioun, patiently and atemprely, and thanne is she as though it were his suster.

The fifthe fynger of the develes hand is the stynkyng dede of lecherie. Certes, the five fynGRES of glotonie the feend put in the wombe of a man, and with his five fynGRES of lecherie he gripeth hym by the reynes for to throwen hym into the fourneys of helle, ther as they shul han the fyr and the wormes that ever shul lasten, and wepyng and wailynge, sharpe hunger and thirst, and grymnesse of develes that shullen al to-tede hem, withouten respit and withouten ende.

[865] Of lecherie, as I seyde, sourden

855. *bushes*, Tyrwhitt's emendation for *beantes* of the MSS.

diverse speses, as fornicacioun that is bitwixe man and womman that been nat married, and this is deedly synne and agayns nature. Al that is enemy and destruccioun to nature is agayns nature. *Parfay*, the resoun of a man telleth eek hym wel that it is deedly synne, for as muche as God forbad leccherie. And Seint Paul yeveth hem the regne, that nys dewe to no wight but to hem that doon deedly synne. Another synne of leccherie is to bireve a mayden of hir maydenhede, for he that so dooth, certes, he casteth a mayden out of the hyeste degree that is in this present lif, and bireveth hire thilke precious fruyt that the book clepeth the 'hundred fruyt.' I ne kan seye it noon oother weyes in Englishsh, but in Latyn it highte *Centesimus fructus*. [870] Certes, he that so dooth is cause of manye damages and vileynyes, mo than any man kan rekene, right as he somtyme is cause of alle damages that beestes don in the feeld that breketh the hegge or the closure, thurgh which he destroyeth that may nat been restored. For certes, namoore may maydenhede be restored than an arm that is smyten fro the body may retourne agayn to wexe. She may have mercy, this woot I wel, if she do penitence; but never shal it be that she nas corrupt.

And, al be it so that I have spoken somewhat of avowtrie, it is good to shewen mo perils that longen to avowtrie, for to eschue that foule synne. Avowtrie in Latyn is for to seyn, approchyng of oother mannes bed, thurgh which tho that whilom weren o flesh abawndone hir bodies to othere persones. [875] Of this synne, as seith the wise man, folwen manye harmes. First, brekyng of feith; and certes, in feith is the keye of Cristendom, and whan that feith is broken and lorn, soothly, Cristendom stant veyn and withouten fruyt. This synne is eek a thefte; for thefte generally is for to reve a wight his thyng agayns his wille. Certes this is the fouleste thefte that may be, whan a womman steleth hir

body from hir housbonde and yeveth it to hire holour to defoulen hire, and steleth hir soule fro Crist, and yeveth it to the devel. This is a fouler thefte than for to breke a chirche and stele the chalice, for thise avowtiers breken the temple of God spiritually, and stelen the vessel of grace, that is the body and the soule, for which Crist shal destroyen hem, as seith Seint Paul.

[880] Soothly of this thefte douteth Joseph, whan that his lordes wyf preyed hym of vileynye, whan he seyde, 'Lo, my lady, how my lord hath take to me under my warde al that he hath in this world, ne no thyng of his thynges is out of my power, but oonly ye, that been his wyf; and how sholde I thanne do this wikkednesse and synne so horrible agayns God, and agayns my lord? God it forbeede!' Allas! al to litel is swich trouthe now y-founde.

The thridde harm is the filthe thurgh which they breken the comandement of God and defoulen the auctour of matrimoyne, that is, Crist. For certes, in so muche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne, so muche is it gretter synne for to breken it; for God made mariage in paradys, in the estaat of innocence, to multiplye mankynde to the service of God; and therfore is the brekyng moore grevous; of which brekyng comen false heires ofte tyme, that wrongfully ocupien folkes heitages. And therfore wol Crist putte hem out of the regne of hevene, that is heritage to goode folk. [885] Of this brekyng cometh eek ofte tyme that folk unwar wedden or synnen with hire owene kynrede, and namely thilke harlottes that haunten bordels of thise fool wommen, that mowe be likned to a commune gonge, where as men purgen hire ordure.

What seye we eek of putours that lyven by the horrible synne of putrie, and constreyne wommen to yelden to hem a certeyn rente of hire bodily puterie,—ye, somtyme of his owene wyf, or his child, as doon this bawdes. Certes, thise been

cursed synnes. Understood eek, that avowtrie is set gladly in the ten comandementz bitwixe thefte and manslaughter, for it is the gretteste thefte that may be, for it is thefte of body and of soule; and it is lyk to homycide, for it kerveth atwo and breketh atwo hem that first were made o flessch, and therefore by the olde lawe of God they sholde be slayn. But natheles, by the lawe of Jhesu Crist, that is lawe of pitee, whan he seyde to the woman that was founden in avowtrie, and sholde han been slayn with stones after the wyl of the Jewes, as was hir lawe, 'Go,' quod Jhesu Crist, 'and have namoore wyl to synne,' or wille namoore to do synne. [890] Soothly, the vengeance of avowtrie is awarded to the peynes of helle, but if so be that it be destourbed by penitence.

Yet been ther mo spesces of this cursed synne, as whan that oon of hem is religious, or elles bothe, or of folk that been entred into ordre, as subdekne, or dekne or preest, or hospitaliers, and ever the hyer that he is in ordre the gretter is the synne. The thynges that gretly agreggen hire synne is the brekyng of hire avow of chastitee, whan they receyved the ordre. And forther-over, sooth is, that hooly ordre is chief of al the tresorie of God, and his especial signe and mark of chastitee, to shewe that they been joyned to chastitee, which that is moost precious lyf that is. And thise ordred folk been specially tittled to God, and of the special meignee of God, for which, whan they doon deedly synne, they been the special traytours of God and of his peple, for they lyven of the peple to preye for the peple, and while they been suche traytours her prayers availle not to the peple.

[895] Preestes been angeles as by the dignitee of hir mystere, but forsothe Seint Paul seith, that Sathanas transformeth hym in an angel of light. Soothly, the preest that haunteth deedly synne, he may be likned to the angel of derknesse transformed in the angel of light; he semeth angel of light, but forsothe he is

angel of derknesse. Swiche preestes been the sones of Helie, as sheweth in the book of Kynges, that they weren the sones of Belial, that is the devel. 'Belial' is to seyn 'withouten juge,' and so faren they; hem thynketh they been free and han no juge, namoore than hath a free bole, that taketh which cow that hym liketh in the town. So faren they by wommen, for right as a free bole is ynough for al a toun, right so is a wikked preest corrupcion ynough for al a parisshe, or for al a contree.

[900] Thise preestes, as seith the book, ne konne nat the mystere of preesthode to the peple, ne God ne knowe they nat; they ne holde hem nat apayd, as seith the book, of soden flessch that was to hem offred, but they tooke by force the flessch that is rawe. Certes, so thise shrewes ne holden hem nat apayed of roasted flessch and sode flessch with which the peple fedden hem in greet reverence, but they wole have raw flessch of folkes wyves and hir doghtres. And certes, thise wommen that consenten to hire harlotrie doon greet wrong to Crist and to hooly chirche and alle halwes, and to alle soules; for they bireven alle thise hym that sholde worshipec Crist and hooly chirche, and preye for cristene soules. And therefore han swiche preestes, and hire lemmanes eek that consenten to hir lecherie, the malisoun of al the court cristene, til they come to amendement.

The thridde spece of avowtrie is som tyme bitwixe a man and his wyf; and that is whan they take no reward in hire assemblynge but oonly to hire fleshly delit, as seith Seint Jerome; [905] and ne rekken of no thyng but that they been assembled. By-cause that they been married al is good ynough, as thynketh to hem. But in swich folk hath the devel power, as seyde the angel Raphael to Thobie, for in hire assemblynge they putten Jhesu Crist out of hire herte, and yeven hem-self to alle ordure.

The fourthe spece is the assemblee of hem that been of hire kynrede, or of hem

that been of oon affynyte, or elles with hem with whiche hir fadres or hir kynrede han deled in the synne of lecherie. This synne maketh hem lyk to houndes that taken no kepe to kynrede. And certes, parentele is in two maneres, outhir goostly or fleshly : goostly, as for to deelen with his godsibbes ; for, right so as he that engendreth a child is his fleshly fader, right so is his godfader his fader espritueel ; for which a womman may in no lasse synne assemblen with hire godsib than with hire owene fleshly brother.

[910] The fiftthe spece is thilke abhominable synne of which that no man unneth oghte speke ne write, natheles it is openly rehersed in holy writ. This cursednesse doon men and women in diverse entente, and in diverse manere, but though that hooly writ speke of horrible synne, certes hooly writ may nat been defouled, namore than the sonnethat shyneth on the mixen.

Another synne aperteneth to lecherie that comth in slepyng ; and this synne cometh ofte to hem that been maydenes, and eek to hem that been corrupt. And this synne men clepen polucioun, that comth in thre maneres. Somtyme of langwysynge of body, for the humours been to ranke and habundaunt in the body of man ; somtyme of infermetee, for the fieblesse of the vertu retentif, as phisik maketh mencion ; somtyme for surfeit of mete and drynke ; and somtyme of vileyns thoghtes that been enclosed in mannes mynde whan he gooth to slepe, which may nat been withoute synne ; for which men moste kepen hem wisely, or elles may men synnen ful greuously.

Remedium contra peccatum Luxurie

[915] Now comth the remedie agayns lecherie, and that is generally chastitee and continence, that restreyneth alle the desordeyne moevynges that comen of fleshly talentes. And ever the gretter merite shal he han that moost restreyneth

the wikkede eschawfynges of the ordure of this synne, and this is in two maneres ; that is to seyn, chastitee in mariage, and chastitee of widwehode. Now shaltow understonde that matrimoyne is leefful assemblynge of man and of womman, that receyven, by vertu of the sacrament, the boond thurgh which they may nat be departed in al hir lyf, that is to seyn, whil that they lyven bothe. This, as seith the book, is a ful greet sacrament ; God maketh it, as I have seyde, in paradys, and wolde hymself be born in mariage ; and, for to halwen mariage, he was at a weddyng, where as he turned water in to wyn, which was the firste miracle that he wroughte in erthe bifore his disciples.

[920] Trewe effect of mariage clenseth fornicacioun and replenyseth hooly chirche of good lynage, for that is the ende of mariage ; and it chaungeth dedly synne into venial synne bitwixe hem that been y-wedded, and maketh the hertes al oon of hem that been y-wedded, as wel as the bodies. This is verray mariage that was established by God, er that synne bigan, whan natureel lawe was in his right poynt in paradys, and it was ordeyned that o man sholde have but o womman, and o womman but o man, as seith Seint Augustyn, by manye resouns.

First, for mariage is figured bitwixe Crist and holy chirche ; and that oother is, for a man is heved of a womman, — algate by ordinaunce it sholde be so. For, if a womman hadde mo men than oon, thanne sholde she have moo hevedes than oon, and that were an horrible thyng bifore God ; and eek a womman ne myghte nat plesse to many folk at oones. And also ther ne sholde never be pees ne reste amonges hem, for everich wolde axen his owene thyng ; and forther-over no man ne sholde knowe his owene engendrure, ne who sholde have his heritage, and the womman sholde been the lasse biloved fro the tyme that she were conjoynt to many men.

[925] Now comth how that a man sholde bere hym with his wif; and namely in two thynges, that is to seyn, in suffraunce and reverence, as shewed Crist whan he made first womman. For he ne made hire nat of the heved of Adam, for she sholde nat clayme to greet lordshipe; for ther as the womman hath the maistrie she maketh to muche desray. Ther neden none ensamples of this, the experience of day by day oghte suffice. Also certes, God ne made nat womman of the foot of Adam, for she ne sholde nat been holden to lowe, for she kan nat paciently suffre. But God made womman of the ryb of Adam for womman sholde be felawe unto man. Man sholde bere hym to his wif in feith, in trouthe, and in love, as seith Seint Paul, that a man sholde loven his wif as Crist loved hooly chirche, that loved it so wel that he deyde for it; so sholde a man for his wif, if it were nede.

[930] Now how that a womman sholde be subget to hire housbonde, that telleth Seint Peter. First, in obedience. And eek, as seith the decree, a womman that is wif, as longe as she is a wif, she hath noon auctoritee to swere, ne bere witnesse, withoute leve of hir housbonde, that is hire lord,--algate he sholde be so by resoun. She sholde eek serven hym in alle honestee, and been attemptrec of hire array. I woot wel that they sholde setten hire entente to plesen hir housbondes, but nat by hire queyntise of array. Seint Jerome seith that wyves that been apparailled in silk and in precious purpie ne mowe nat clothen hem in Jhesu Crist. What seith Seint John eek in thys matere? Seint Gregorie eek seith that no wight seketh precious array, but oonly for veyne glorie to been honoured the moore biforn the peple. [935] It is a greet folye, a womman to have a fair array outward and in hir-self foul inward.

A wif sholde eek be mesurable in lookyng, and in beryng, and in lawghyng, and discreet in all hire wordes and

hire dedes and aboven alle worldly thyng she sholde loven hire housbonde with al hire herte, and to hym be trewe of hir body. So sholde an housbonde eek be to his wif, for, sith that al the body is the housbondes, so sholde hire herte been, or elles ther is bitwixe hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage.

Thanne shal men understonde that for thre thynges a man and his wif fleshly mowen assemble. The firste is in entente of engendrure of children, to the service of God, for certes that is the cause final of matrimoyne. [940] Another cause is to yelden everich of hem to oother the dette of hire bodies, for neither of hem hath power over his owene body. The thridde is for to eschewe leccherye and vileynye. The ferthe is forsothe deedly synne. As to the firste, it is meritoie; the seconde also, for, as seith the decree, that she hath merite of chastitee that yeldeth to hire housbonde the dette of hir body, ye, though it be agayn hir likyng and the lust of hire herte. The thridde manere is venyal synne, and trewely scarsly may ther any of thise be withoute venial synne, for the corrupcioun and for the delit. The fourthe manere is for to understonde if they assemble oonly for amorous love, and for noon of the foreseyde causes, but for to accomplice thilke brennyng delit, they rekke never how ofte, soothly it is deedly synne, and yet with sorwe somme folk wol peynen hem moore to doon than to hire appetit suffiseth.

The seconde manere of chastitee is for to been a clene wydelewe and eschue the embracynges of man and desiren the embracyng of Jhesu Crist. [945] Thise been tho that han been wyves and han forgoon hire housbondes, and eek women that han doon leccherie and been releevd by penitence. And certes, if that a wif koude kepen hire al chaast, by licence of hir housbonde, so that she yeve never noon occasion that he agite, it were to hire a greet merite. Thise

manere wommen that observen chastitee moste be clene in herte, as wele as in body and in thoughte, and mesurable in clothyng and in contaunce, abstinent in etyng and drynkyng, in spekyng and in dede. They been the vessel, or the boyste of the blissed Magdelene, that fulfilleth hooly chirche of good odour.

The thridde manere of chastitee is virginitee, and it bihoveth that she be hooly in herte, and clene of body; thanne is she spouse to Jhesu Crist, and she is the lyf of angeles. She is the preisyng of this world, and she is as thise martirs in egalitee. She hath in hire that tonge may nat telle, ne herte thynke. [950] Virginitee baar oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and virgine was hymselfe.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is specially to withdrawn swiche thynges as yeve occasion to thilke vileynye, as ese, etyng and drynkyng; for certes, whan the pot boyleth strongly the beste remedie is to withdrawe the fyr. Slepynge longe in greet quite is eek a greet norice to leccherie.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is that a man or a womman eschue the compaignye of hem by whiche he douteth to be tempted, for al be it so that the dede is withstonden, yet is ther greet temptacioun. Soothly, a whit wal, although it ne brenne noght fully by stikyng of a candeale, yet is the wal blak of the leyt. Ful ofte tyme [955] I rede, that no man truste in his owene perfeccioun, but he be stronger than Sampson, and hoolier than Danyel, and wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I have declared yow as I kan the sevene deedly synnes, and somme of hire braunches and hire remedies, soothly, if I koude, I wolde telle yow the ten comandementz; but so heigh a doctrine I lete to divines; natheles I hope to God they been touched in this tretice, everich of hem alle.

Sequitur secunda pars Penitencie

Now, for as muche as the seconde partie of penitence stant in confessioun of mouth, as I bigan in the firste chapitre, I seye, Seint Augustyn seith, 'Synne is every word and every dede, and al that men coveiten agayn the lawe of Jhesu Crist; and this is for to synne in herte, in mouth, and in dede, by thy five wittes, that been sighte, heryng, smellyng, tastyng or savouryng, and feelyng.'

[960] Now is it good to understonde the circumstaunces that aggreggeth muchel every synne. Thow shalt considere what thow art that doost the synne; wheither thou be male or femele, yong or oold, gentil or thral, free or servant, hool or syk, wedded or sengle, ordred or unordred, wys or fool, clerk or seculer; if she be of thy kynrede, bodily or gostly, or noon; if any of thy kynrede have synned with hire or noon, and manye mo thynges.

Another circumstaunce is this, wheither it be doon in fornicacioun, or in avowtrie, or noon, incest or noon, mayden or noon, in manere of homicide or noon, horrible grete synnes or smale, and how longe thou hast continued in synne. The thridde circumstaunce is the place ther thou hast do synne, wheither in oother mennes hous or in thyn owene, in feeld or in chirche or in chirchewawe, in chirche dedicaat or noon; [965] for if the chirche be halwed, and man or womman spille his kynde in-with that place, by wey of synne or by wikked temptacioun, the chirche is entredited til it be reconciled by the bysshope; and the preest that dide swich a vileyne, to terme of al his lif he sholde namoore synge masse; and if he dide, he sholde doon deedly synne at every time that he so songe masse. The fourthe circumstaunce is, by whiche mediators or by whiche messagers, as for enticement or for consentment to here compaignye with felaweshipe,—for many a wrecche,

for to bere compaignye, wil go to the deuel of helle,—wher-fore they that eggen or consenten to the synne been parteners of the synne and of the dampnacioun of the synnere.

The fifthe circumstance is, how manye tymes that he hath synned, if it be in his mynde, and how ofte that he hath falle; [970] for he that ofte falleth in synne he despiseth the mercy of God and encreesseth hys synne, and is unkynde to Crist, and he wexeth the moore fieble to withstonde synne and synneth the moore lightly. And the latter ariseth, and is the moore eschew for to shryven hym, namely to hym that is his confessour; for which that folk whan they falle agayn in hir olde folies, outhen they forleten hir olde confessours al outrely, or elles they departen hir shrift in diverse places, but soothly swich departed shrift deserveth no mercy of God of his synnes. The sixte circumstance is, why that a man synneth, as by whiche temptacioun, and if hymself procure thilke temptacioun, or by the excitynge of oother folke; or if he synne with a womman by force, or by hire owene assent, or if the womman maugree hir hed hath been afforced or noon, this shal she telle; for coveitise, or for poverté, and if it was hire procuryng or noon, and swiche manere harneys.

[975] The seventhe circumstance is, in what manere he hath doon his synne, or how that she hath suffred that folk han doon to hire, and the same shal the man telle pleynly with alle circumstaunces, and wheither he hath synned with comune bordel women or noon, or doon his synne in hooly tymes or noon, in fastyng tymes or noon, or biforn his shrifte, or after his latter shrifte, and hath peraventure broken therefore his penance enjoyned; by whos helpe and whos conseil, by sorcelie or craft,—al moste be toold. Alle thise thynges, after that they been grete or smale,

engreggen the conscience of man. And eek the preest, that is thy juge, may the better been avysed of his juggement in yevyng of thy penance, and that is after thy contricioun. [980] For understond wel that after tyme that a man hath defouled his baptesme by synne, if he wole come to salvacioun, ther is noon other wey but by penitence, and shrifte, and satisfaccioun; and namely by the two, if ther be a confessour to which he may shryven hym, and the thridde, if he have lyf to parfournen it.

Thanne shal man looke and considere that if he wole maken a trewe and a profitable confessioun ther moste be seure condiciouns. First, it moot been in sorweful bitternesse of herte, as seyde the kyng Ezechiel to God, 'I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lif in bitternesse of myn herte.' This condicioun of bitternesse hath fyve signes. The firste is, that confessioun moste be shamefast, nat for to covere ne hyden his synne, for he hath agilt his God and defouled his soule; [985] and ther-of seith Seint Augustyn, 'The herte travaileth for shame of his synne, and for he hath greet shamefastnesse he is digne to have greet mercy of God.' Swich was the confessioun of the pupican that wolde nat heaven up his eyen to hevene, for he hadde offended God of hevene; for which shamefastnesse he hadde anon the mercy of God. And ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that swich shamefast folk been next foryevenesse and remissioun.

Another signe is humylitee in confessioun, of which seith Seint Peter, 'Humbleth yow under the myght of God.' The hond of God is myghty in confessioun, for ther-by God foryeveth thee thy synnes, for he allone hath the power. And this humylitee shal been in herte and in signe outward; for right as he hath humylitee to God in his herte; right so sholde he humble his body outward to the preest that sit in Goddes

965. *wil, E shal.*

970. *departed shrift*, cp. 1006-11.

980. *Ezechiel*, Hezekiah.

place. [990] For which in no manere, sith that Crist is sovereyn and the preest meene and mediatour bitwixe Crist and the synnere, and the synnere is the laste by wey of resoun, thanne sholde nat the synnere sitte as heighe as his confessour, but knele biforn hym or at his feet, but if maladie destourbe it ; for he shal nat taken kepe, who sit there, but in whos place that he sitteth. A man that hath trespassed to a lord and comth for to axe mercy and maken his accord and set him doun anon by the lord, men wolde holden hym outrageous and nat worthy so soone for to have remissioun ne mercy.

The thridde signe is, how that thy shrift sholde be ful of teeris, if man may ; and if man may nat wepe with his bodily eyen, lat hym wepe in herte. Swich was the confessioun of Seint Peter, for after that he hadde forsake Jhesu Crist he wente out and weepe ful bitterly. [995] The fourthe signe is, that he ne lette nat for shame to shewen his confessioun ; swich was the confessioun of the Magdelene, that ne spared for no shame of hem that weren atte feeste for to go to oure Lord Jhesu Crist and biknowe to hym hire synnes. The fifthe signe is, that a man or a womman be obeisant to receyven the penaunce that hym is enjoyned for his synnes, for certes Jhesu Crist for the giltes of a man was obedient to the deeth.

The seconde condicion of verray confession is that it be hastily doon ; for certes, if a man hadde a deedly wounde, ever the lenger that he taried to warisshe hymself the moore wolde it corrupte and haste hym to his deeth, and eek the wounde wolde be the wors for to heele ; and right so fareth synne that longe tyme is in a man unshewed.

[1000] Certes a man oghte hastily shewen his synnes for manye causes ; as for drede of deeth that cometh ofte sodenly, and is in no certeyn what tyme it shal be, ne in what place ; and eek the drecchyng of o synne draweth in another ; and eek the lenger that he tarieth the ferther

he is fro Crist. And if he abide to his laste day scarsly may he shryven hym, or remembre hym of his synnes, or repenten hym for the grevous maladie of his deeth. And for as muche as he ne hath nat in his lyf herkned Jhesu Crist whanne he hath spoken, he shal crie to Jhesu Crist at his laste day and scarsly wol he herkne hym.

And understond that this condicioun moste han foure thynges. Thi shrift moste be purveyed bifore and avysed, for wikked haste dooth no profit ; and that a man konne shryve hym of his synnes, be it of pride, or of envye, and so forth, of the speses and circumstances ; and that he have comprehended in hys mynde the nombre and the greetnesse of his synnes, and how longe that he hath leyn in synne ; [1005] and eek that he be contrit of his synnes, and in stidefast purpos, by the grace of God, never eft to falle in synne ; and eek that he drede and countrewaite hymself that he fle the occasiouns of synne to whiche he is enclined.

Also thou shalt shryve thee of alle thy synnes to o man, and nat a parcel to o man and a parcel to another ; that is to understonde in entente to departe thy confessioun as for shame or drede, for it nys but stranglyng of thy soule. For certes Jhesu Crist is entierly al good ; in hym nys noon inperfeccioun, and therefore outhur he foryeveth al parfitly, or never a decl. I seye nat that if thou be assigned to the penitauncer for certein synne that thou art bounde to shewen hym al the remenaunt of thy synnes of whiche thou hast be shryven to thy curaat, but if it like to thee of thyn humylitee ; this is no departyng of shrifte. Ne I seye nat, ther as I speke of divisioun of confessioun, that if thou have licence for to shryve thee to a discreet and an honeste preest, where thee liketh, and by licence of thy curaat, that thou ne mayst wel shryve thee to him of alle thy synnes ; [1010] but lat no blotte be bihynde, lat no synne been

untoold, as fer as thou hast remembrance. And whan thou shalt be shryven to thy curaat telle hym eek alle the synnes that thou hast doon syn thou were last y-shryven; this is no wikked entente of divisoun of shrifte.

Also, the verray shrifte axeth certeine condiciouns. First, that thou shryve thee by thy free wil, noght constreyned, ne for shame of folk, ne for maladie, ne swiche thynges, for it is resoun that he that trespasseth by his free wyl, that by his free wyl he confesse his trespass; and that noon oother man telle his synne but he hymself; ne he shal nat nayte ne denye his synne, ne wratthe hym agayn the preest for his amonestynge to leve synne.

The seconde condicioun is, that thy shrift be laweful, that is to seyn that thou that shryvest thee, and eek the preest that heareth thy confessioun, been verrailly in the feith of hooly chirche, [1015] and that a man ne be nat despeired of the mercy of Jhesu Crist as Caym or Judas. And eek a man moot accusen hymself of his owene trespas, and nat another, but he shal blame and wyten hymself and his owene malice of his synne and noon oother; but natheles if that another man be occasioun or enticere of his synne, or the estat of a persone be swich thurgh which his synne is aggregated, or elles that he may nat pleyntly shryven hym but he telle the persone with which he hath synned, thanne may he telle; so that his entente ne be nat to bakbite the persone, but oonly to declaren his confessioun.

Thou ne shalt nat eek make no lesynges in thy confessioun for humylitee, peraventure to seyn that thou hast doon synnes of whiche that thou were never gilty. [1020] For Seint Augustyn seith, 'If thou by cause of thyn humylitee makest lesynges on thyself, though thou ne were nat in synne biforn, yet artow thanne in synne thurgh thy lesynges.' Thou most eek shewe thy synne by thyn owene propre mouth, but thou be woxe downb,

and nat by no lettre, for thou that hast doon the synne thou shalt have the shame therfore. Thou shalt nat eek peynte thy confessioun by faire subtile wordes, to cove the moore thy synne, for thanne bigilestow thyself and nat the preest; thou most tellen it pleyntly, be it never so foul ne so horrible.

Thou shalt eek shryve thee to a preest that is discreet to conseil, and eek thou shalt nat shryve thee for veyne glorie, ne for ypocrisie, ne for no cause, but oonly for the doute of Jhesu Crist and the heele of thy soule. Thou shalt nat eek renne to the preest sodeynly to tellen hym lightly thy synne, as who so telleth a jape or a tale, but avysely, and with greet devocioun.

[1025] And, generally, shryve thee ofte. If thou ofte falle, ofte thou arise by confessioun, and though thou shryve thee often than ones of synne of which thou hast be shryven, it is the moore merite. And, as seith Seint Augustyn, thou shalt have the moore lightly relesyng and grace of God bothe of synne and of peyne. And certes, oones a yeere atte leeste way is it laweful for to been housled, for certes, oones a yeere alle thynges renovellen.

Now have I toolde you of verray confessioun, that is the seconde partie of penitence.

Explicit secunda pars penitencie et sequitur tercia pars eiusdem

The thridde partie of penitence is satisfaccioun and that stant moost generally in almesse, and in bodily peyne. [1030] Now been ther thre manere of almesses: contricioun of herte, where a man offreth hymself to God; another is to han pitee of defaute of his neighebores; and the thridde is in yevynge of good conseil and comfort, goostly and bodily, where men han nede, and namely in sustenance of mannes foode. And tak kepe that a man hath nede of these thynges generally, he hath nede of foode, he hath nede of

clothyng and herberwe, he hath nede of charitable conseil and visitynge in prisone and in maladie, and sepulture of his dede body. And if thow mayst nat visite the nedeful with thy persone, visite hym by thy message and by thy yiftes. Thise been generally almesses or werkes of charitee of hem that han temporeel riches or discrecioun in conseilynge. Of thise werkes shaltow heren at the day of doome.

Thise almesses shaltow doon of thyne owene propre thynges, and hastily and prively if thow mayst; [1035] but natheles if thow mayst nat doon it prively, thow shalt nat forbere to doon almesse though men seen it, so that it be nat doon for thank of the world, but oonly for thank of Jhesu Crist; for, as witnesseth Saint Mathew, *capitulo* v., 'A citec may nat been hyd that is set on a montayne, ne men lighte nat a lanterne and put it under a busshel, but men sette it on a candlestikke to yeve light to the men in the hous; right so shal youre light lighten bfore men, that they may seen youre goode werkes and glorifie youre Fader that is in hevene.'

Now as to speken of bodily peyne; it stant in preyeres, in wakynges, in fastynges, in vertuouse techinges of orisouns.

And ye shul understonde that orisouns or preyeres is for to seyn a pitous wyl of herte that redresseth it in God, and expresseth it by word outward to remoeven harmes, and to han thynges espritueel and durable, and somtyme temporele thynges, of whiche orisouns, certes, in the orison of the *Pater noster* hath Jhesu Crist enclosed moost thynges. [1040] Certes, it is privileged of thre thynges in his dignytee, for which it is moore digne than any oother preyer: for that Jhesu Crist hymself maketh it; and it is short, for it sholde be koud the moore lightly, and for to withholden it the moore esily in herte, and helpen hym self the offer with the orisoun, and for a man sholde be the lasse wery to seyen it, and for a man may nat excusen hym to

lerne it, it is so short and so esy; and for it comprehendeth in itself alle goode preyeres.

The exposicioun of this hooly preyer that is so excellent and digne, I bitake to thise maistres of theologie, save thus muchel wol I seyn, that whan thow prayest that God sholde foryeve thee thy giltes as thou foryevest hem that agilten to thee, be ful wel war that thow be nat out of charitee. This hooly orisoun amenuseth eek venyal synne, and therefore it aperteneth specially to penitence.

[1045] This preyer moste be trewely seyde, and in verray feith, and that men preye to God ordinatly and discreetly and devoutly, and alwey a man shal putten his wyl to be subget to the wille of God. This orisoun moste eek been seyde with greet humblesse and ful pure honesty, and nat to the anoyauce of any man or womman. It moste eek been continued with the werkes of charitee. It avayleth eek agayn the vices of the soule, for, as seith Saint Jerome, 'By fastyng been saved the vices of the flesh, and by preyer the vices of the soule.'

After this thou shalt understonde that bodily peyne stant in wakyng; for Jhesu Crist seith, 'Waketh and preyeth that ye ne entre in wikked temptacioun.' [1050] Ye shul understanden also, that fastyng stant in thre thynges: in forberyng of bodily mete and drynke, and in forberyng of worldly jolitee, and in forberyng of deedly synne, this is to seyn, that a man shal kepen hym from deedly synne with al his myght.

And thou shalt understanden eek that God ordeyned fastyng; and to fastyng appertenen foure thynges: largenesse to poure folk, gladnesse of herte espritueel, nat to been angry ne anoyed ne grucche for he fasteth, and also resonable houre for to ete by mesure, that is for to seyn, a man shal nat ete in untyme, ne sitte the lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth.

Thanne shaltow understonde that

bodily peyne stant in disciplyne or techynge by word and by writynge or in ensample; also in werynge of heyres, or of stamyn, or of haubergeons on hire naked flessch, for Cristes sake, and swiche manere penaunces. But war thee wel that swiche manere penaunces on thy flessch ne make thee nat or angry or anyoyed of thy self; for bettre is to caste away thyn heyre, than for to caste away the swetnesse of Jhesu Crist. And therefore seith Seint Paul, 'Clothe yow, as they that been chosen of God, in herte, of misericorde, debonairetee, suffraunce,' and swiche manere of clothynge, of whiche Jhesu Crist is moore apayed than of heyres or haubergeons or hauberkes.

[1055] Thanne is discipline eek in knokkyng of thy brest, in scourgyng with yerdes, in knelynges, in tribulacions, in suffryng paciently wronges that been doon to thee, and eek in pacient suffraunce of maladies, or lesynge of worldly catel, or of wyf, or of child, or otherde freendes.

Thanne shaltow understande whiche thynges destourben penaunce; and this is in foure maneries; that is, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, desperacioun. And for to speke first of drede, for which he weneth that he may suffre no penaunce. Theragayns is remedie for to thynke that bodily penaunce is but short and litel, at regard of the peynes of helle, that is so cruell and so long that it lasteth withouten ende.

[1060] Now again, the shame that a man hath to shryven hym, and namely thise ypocrites that wolden been holden so parfite that they han no nede to shryven hem. Agayns that shame sholde a man thynke that by wey of resoun that he that hath nat been shamed to doon foule thinges, certes hym oghte nat been ashamed to do faire thynges, and that is confessiouns. A man sholde eek thynke that God seeth and woot alle his thoghtes and alle his werkes; to hym

may no thyng been hyd ne covered. Man sholden eek remembren hem of the shame that is to come at the day of doome to hem that been nat penitent and shryven in this present lyf; for alle the creatures in erthe and in helle shullen seen apertly al that they hyden in this world.

[1065] Now for to speken of the hope of hem that been negligent and slowe to shryven hem; that stant in two maneres. That oon is that he hopeth for to lyve longe and for to purchacen muche richesse for his delit, and thanne he wol shryven hym, and as he seith, hym semeth thanne tymely ynough to come to shrifte. Another is surquidrie, that he hath in Cristes mercy. Agayns the firste vice, he shal thynke that oure lif is in no sikernes, and eek that alle the riches in this world ben in aventure and passen as a shadwe on the wal; and, as seith Seint Gregorie, that it aperteneth to the grete rightwisesse of God, that never shal the peyne stynte, of hem that never wolde withdrawn hem fro synne hir thankes, but ay continue in synne, for thilke perpetuel wil to do synne shul they han perpetuel peyne.

[1070] Wanhope is in two maneres: the firste wanhope is in the mercy of Crist; that oother is that they thynken that they ne myghte nat longe persevere in goodnesse. The firste wanhope comth of that he demeth that he hath synned so greetly, and so ofte, and so longe leyn in synne, that he shal nat be saved. Certes, agayns that cursed wanhope sholde he thynke that the passion of Jhesu Crist is moore strong for to unbynde than synne is strong for to bynde. Agayns the seconde wanhope he shal thynke that as ofte as he falleth he may arise agayn by penitence; and though he never so longe have leyn in synne, the mercy of Crist is alwey redy to receiven hym to mercy. Agayns the wanhope that he demeth that he sholde nat longe persevere in goodnesse, he shal thynke that the feblesse of

1050. *swetnesse*, E² *sikernes*.

the devel may no thyng doon but if men wol suffren hym, [1075] and eek he shal han strengthe of the helpe of God, and of al hooly chirche, and of the proteccioun of aungels, if hym list.

Thanne shal men understonde what is the fruyt of penaunce; and, after the word of Jhesu Crist, it is the endeles blisse of hevene. Ther joye hath no contrariouste of wo, ne grevaunce; ther alle harmes been passed of this present lyf; ther as is the sikernes fro the peyne of helle; ther as is the blisful compaignye that rejoysen hem evermo everich of othes joye; ther as the body of man, that whilom was foul and derk, is moore cleer than the sonne; ther as the body, that whilom was syk, freele, and fieble, and mortal, is immortal and so strong and so hool that ther may no thyng apeyren it; ther as ne is neither hunger, thurst, ne coold, but every soule replenyssed with the sighte of the parfit knowynge of God.

[1080] This blisful regne may men purchase by poverte espirituel, and the glorie by lowenesse, the plentee of joye by hunger and thurst, and the reste by travaille, and the lyf by deeth and mortificacioun of synne.

Here taketh the Makere of this Book his Leve

Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretys or rede, that if ther be any thyng in it that liketh hem, that ther-of they thanken oure Lord Jhesu Crist, of whom procedeth al wit and al goodnesse; and if ther be any thyng that displese hem, I preye hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unkonnyng, and nat to my wyl, that wolde ful fayn have seyð bettre if I hadde had konnyng; for oure boke seith, 'Al that is writen is written for oure doctrine,' and that is myn entente.

Wherfore I biseke yow mekely, for the mercy of God, that ye preye for me that Crist have mercy on me and foryeve me

my giltes, [1085] and namely of my translaciouns and enditynges of worldly vanitees the whiche I revoke in my Retracciouns; as is the book of Troylus; the book also of Fame; the book of the xxv Ladies; the book of the Duchesse; the book of Seint Valentynes day, of the Parlement of Briddes; the Tales of Canterbury,—thilke that sownen in to synne; the book of the Leoun; and many another book, if they were in my remembrance; and many a song and many a lecherous lay, that Crist, for his grete mercy, foryeve me the synne.

But of the translacioun of Boece *De Consolacione* and othere bookes of Legendes of Seintes, and omelics and moralitee, and devocioun, that thanke I oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and his blisful mooder and alle the Seintes of hevene, [1090] bisekyng hem that they from hennes forth unto my lyves ende sende me grace to biwayle my giltes and to studie to the salvacioun of my soule; and graunte me grace of verray penitence, confessioun and satisfaccioun, to doon in this present lyf, thurgh the benigne grace of hym that is Kyng of Kynges, and Preest over alle Preestes, that boghte us with the precious blood of his herte, so that I may been oon of hem at the day of doome that shulle be saved. *Qui cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia secula. Amen.*

Heere is ended the book of the Tales of Canterbury, compiled by Geffrey Chaucer, of whos soule Jhesu Crist have mercy. Amen.

1085. my Retracciouns, apparently a formal document.

1086. the book of the xxv Ladies, the 'Legend of Good Women'; Lans. xv., H xxix.

1087. the book of the Leoun, lost—probably a translation from Machault.

1087. another book, H² other bokes.

1087. remembrance, H mynde or remembrance.

1088. of Legendes of, H of consolacioun and of Legendes of lyves of.

EARLIER MINOR POEMS

THE DETHE OF BLAUNCHE THE DUCHESSE

I HAVE gret wonder, by this lyghte,
How that I lyve, for day ne nyghte
I may slepè wel neigh noght ;
I have so many an ydel thoght,
Purely for defaute of slepe,
That, by my trouthe, I take no kepe
Of no thyng how hit cometh or gooth,
Ne me nis no thyng leef nor looth.

Al is y-lichè good to me,—
Joye or sorwe, wherso hit be,—
For I have felyng in no thyng,
But as it were, a masèd thyng
Alway in poynt to falle a-doun ;
For sorwful ymagynacioun
Is alway hoolly in my mynde.

And wel ye woot agaynès kynde
Hit were to liven in this wyse,
For Nature woldè nat suffyse
To noon erthly créature
Not long tymè to endure
Without slepe, and been in sorwe ;
And I ne may, no nyght ne morwe,
Slepe ; and this melancolye
And drede I havè for to dye,
Defaute of slepe and hevynesse,
Hath sleyn my spirit of quyknesse
That I have lost al lustihede.
Suche fantasies been in myn hede
So I noot what is best to do.

But men myghte axè me why so
I may not slepe, and what me is ?
But nathèless, who askè this
Leseth his asking trewely.
My selven can not tellè why
The sothe ; but trewely, as I gesse,

^{31-36.} Tn. omits these lines ; F has them in a later hand.

I holdè hit ben a siknesse
That I have suffred this eight yere, --
And yet my boote is never the nere ;
For ther is phisicien but oon
That may me hele ; but that is doon. 40
Passe we over until eft ;
That wil not be, moot nede be left ;
Our first matere is good to kepe.

So whan I saw I might not slepe
Til now late, this other nyght
Upon my bedde I sat upryght
And bad oon rechè me a book,
A romaunce, and he hit me took
To rede, and dryve the nyght away ;
For me thoughte it better play 50
Then playen either at chesse or tablès.

And in this book were writen fablès
That clerkès hadde, in oldè tyme,
And other poets, put in ryme
To rede, and for to be in mynde
Whyl men loved the lawe of kynde.
This book ne spak but of such thynges
Of quenès livès, and of kynges
And many other thyngès smale.

Amonge al this I fond a tale 60
That me thoughte a wonder thyng.

This was the tale : There was a kyng
That hightè Seys, and hadde a wyf,
The bestè that mighte berè lyf ;
And this quene hightè Alcyone.
So hit befill, thereafter sone
This kyng wolde wenden over see.

To tellen shortly, whan that he
Was in the see, thus in this wyse,
Swich a tempest gan to ryse 70
That brak hir mast and made it falle,
And cleftè hir ship, and dreinte hem alle,
That never was foundè, as it telles,
Bórd ne man, ne nothyng elles.
Right thus this kyng Seys loste his lyf.

Now for to speken of his wyf.
 This lady, that was left at home,
 Hath wonder that the king ne come
 Home, for it was a longé terme.
 Anon hir herté bigan to erme,
 And for that hir thoghte evermo
 It was not wel,—he dwelté so.
 She longéd so after the kyng,
 That certes, it were a pitous thyng
 To telle hir hertely sorwful lyf
 That she had, this noble wyf;
 For him she lovéd alderbest!
 Anon she sente bothe eest and west
 To seke him, but they foundé nought.

'Alas,' quoth she, 'that I was wrought!
 I make avowe to my god here,
 But I mowe of my lordé here,
 And wher my lord, my love, be deed,
 Certes, I nylle never eté breed.'

Swich sorw this lady to hir took,
 That trewely I, which made this book,
 Had swich pité and swich rowthe
 To rede hir sorwe, that by my trowthe,
 I ferde the worsé al the morwe
 After, to thenken on hir sorwe.

So whan this lady coude heere no
 word

That no man myghté fynde hir lord,
 Ful oft she swouned, and seyde, 'Alas!'
 For sorwé ful neigh wood she was,
 Ne she koude no reed but oon;
 But doun on knees she sat anoon
 And wepte, that pité was to here.

'A! mercy! sweté ladi dere!'
 Quod she to Juno, hir goddessse;
 'Helpe me out of this distresse,
 And yeve me grace my lord to se
 Sóone, or wite wher-so he be,
 Or how he fareth, or in what wyse,
 And I shal make yow sacrifice,
 And hoolly youres become I shal
 With good wil, body, herte, and al;
 And but thou wilt this, ladi swete,
 Send me grace to slepe, and mete
 In my slepe som certeyn sweven,

80. *erme*, Ten Brink and Skeat's emendation of *yerne* of MSS.

82. *he dwelte*, Skeat's emendation of *her thought* of the MSS., repeated from l. 81.

87. All MSS. read *For him alas she*, etc.

92-94. All place these couplets in reverse order.

Wher-through that I may knowen even
 Whether my lord be quyk or deed.' 121

With that word she heng doun the heed
 And fil a-swown, as colde as ston.

Hir women caughte her up anon,
 And broghten hir in bed al nakéd,
 And she, forwepéd and forwakéd,
 Was wery, and thus the dedé sleep
 Fil on hir, or she toké keep,
 Through Juno that had herd hir bone,
 That madé hir to slepé sone; 130

For as she prayde, right so was don
 In dede, for Juno right anon
 Calledé thus hir messagere
 To do hir erande, and he com nere.

Whan he was come, she bad him thus:
 'Go bet,' quod Juno, 'to Morpheus,—
 Thou knowest him wel, the god of sleep,—
 Now understond wel, and tak keep;
 Sey thus, on my halfe, that he
 Go faste in-to the greté se, 140

And bid him that, on allé thyng,
 He take up Seys body the kyng,
 That lyeth ful pale and no-thing rody.
 Bid him crepe in-to the body
 And doo hit goon to Aleyone

The quené, ther she lyeth allone,
 And shewe hir shortly—hit is no nay!—
 How hit was dreynt this other day,
 And doo the body speke right soo,
 Right as hit was woned to doo 150
 The whylés that hit was alyve.
 Goo now faste, and hy the blyve!'

This messager took leve and wente
 Upon his wey, and never ne stente,
 Til he com to the derke valeye
 That stant betwixé rochés tweye,
 Ther never yet grew corn ne gras,
 Ne tre, ne no thyng that ough was,
 Bést ne man, ne no wight elles,
 Save ther were a fewé welles 160
 Came rennyng fro the clifés a-doun,
 That made a deedly, slepyng soun,
 And ronnen doun right by a cave
 That was under a rokke y-grave
 Amidde the valey, wonder depe.

133. *messagere*, i.e. Iris.

136. *Go bet*, lit. go better, i.e. fast.

142. *He*, etc.; F Tn. B. *That he*, etc.

158. *no thyng*. All read *nought*.

159. *no wight*. All read *nought*.

Ther this goddès laye and slepe,—
Morpheus, and Eclympasteyre,
That was the god of slepès heyre,
That sleepe and dide noon other we¹⁶⁷.

This cavè was also as derk 170
As hellè pit over-al aboute.
They had good leyser for to route,
To envye who might slepè beste.
Some henge hir chyn upon hir breste
And slepte upright, hir heed y-hede,
And some laye naked in hir bedde
And slepè whyles the dayès laste.

This messager com fleyng faste 178
And cried, 'O, hoo! a-wak anoon!'
Hit was for noght, ther herde him noon,
'A-wak!' quod he, 'who is it lyth there!'
And blew his horne right in hir ere,
And cried, 'A-waketh!' wonder hye.
This god of slepe, with his oon yē
Cast up, axed, 'Who clepèth there?'
'Hit am I,' quod this messagere,
'Juno bad thou shuldest goon,'—
And tolde him what he shuldè doon
As I have tolde yow here-to-fore,
Hit is no need rerse hit more; 190
And went his wey whan he hadde sayd.

Anoon this god of slepe a-brayd
Out of his slepe, and gan to goon,
And dide as he hadde bede him doon;
Took up the dreyntè body sone
And bar hit forth to Alcyone,
His wyf the quene, ther-as she lay,
Right even a quarter before day,
And stood right at hir beddès feete,
And callèd hir right as she heete 200
By name, and seyde, 'My swetè wyf,
Awak! let be your sorwful lyf!
For in your sorwe ther lyth no reed;
For certes, swete, I am but deed,
Ye shul me never on lyve y-se,
But, good swete hertè, [for] that ye
Burie my body, swich a tyde 207
Ye mowe hit fynde the see besyde,
(And far-wel, swete, my worldès blisse!)

167. *Eclympasteyre*. Meaning and derivation doubtful—represents perhaps *Icelon plastera* or *Icelon Phobetora*, cp. Ovid. *Met.* xi. 640.

181. *who is*, etc. F omits it; Th. inserts that after it; Th. *who lyeth*.

206. *for that*. All om. *for*; B om. *herte* also.

207. *swich a*. All read *for swich a*.

I prayè god your sorwè lisse; 210
To litel whyl our blissè lasteth!
'With that hir eyen up she casteth
And saw noght. 'Allas!' quod she for
sorwe,

And deyde within the thriddè morwe.
But what she sayde more in that swow
I may not tellè yow as now,
Hit were to longè for to dwelle,
My first matere I wil yow telle,
Wherfor I havè told this thyng
Of Alcyone and Seys the kyng.

For thus moche dar I sayè wel,
I had be dolven everydel,
And deed, right through defaute of sleepe,
Gif I nadde red and takè keepe
Of this talè next befor;
And I wol tellè yow wherfor;
For I ne might, for bote ne bale,
Slepe, or I hadde red this tale
Of this dreyntè Seys the kyng
And of the goddès of slepyng. 230

Whan I hadde red this talè wel,
And over-loked hit everydel,
Me thoghtè wonder if hit were so,
For I hadde never herd speke, or tho,
Of no goddès that koudè make
Men to sleepe, ne for to wake;
For I ne knewe never God but oon,
And in my game I sayde anoon,—
And yet me lyst right evel to pleye,—
'Rather than that I shuldè deye 240
Throgh defaute of slepyng thus
I wolde yive thilkè Morpheus
Or his goddèssè, dame Juno,
Or som wight elles, I ne roghtè who,
To make me sleepe and have som reste,—
I wil yive him the alder-beste
Yift that ever he abood his lyve.
And here on warde, right now, as blyve,
If he wol make me slepe a lite,
Of downe of purè dowwès white 250
I wil yive him a fether-bed,
Rayèd with golde, and right wel cled
In fyn blak satyn *doutremere*,
And many a pilwe, and every bere
Of clothe of Reynes, to slepè softe;
Him thar not nede to turnen ofte.

255. *Rennes*, in Brittany. Linen is still made there.

And I wol yive him al that fallès
 To a chambre ; and al his hallès
 I wol do peynte with purè golde,
 And tapite hem ful many folde 260
 Of oo sute : this shal he have
 If I wiste wher were his cave,
 If he kan make me sleepè sone,
 As did the goddesse quene Alcione ;
 And thus this ilkè god, Moirpheus,
 May wynne of me mo feès thus
 Than ever he wan ; and to Juno,
 That is his goddesse, I shal so do,
 I trowe, that she shal holde hir payd.

I hadde unneth that word y-sayd 270
 Right thus as I have told it yow,
 That sodeynly, I nistè how,
 Swich a lust anon me took
 To sleep, that right upon my book
 I fil asleepe, and therwith even
 Me mette so ynly swete a sweven,
 So wonderful, that never yit
 I trowè no man hadde the wit
 To konnè wel my sweven rede. 280
 No, not Joseph, with-outè drede,
 Of Egipte, he that reddè so
 The kyngès metyng, Pharao,
 No more than koude the leste of us ;
 Ne nat skarsly Macrobeus,
 He that wroot al thavisoun
 That he mette, kyng Scipioun,
 The noble man, the Afrikan,—
 Swichè mervayles, fortunèd than,—
 I trowe, a-rede my dremès even. 289
 Lo, thus hit was, this was my sweven.

The Dream

Me thoughtè thus,—that hit was May,
 And in the dawenyng I lay,
 (Me mette thus,) in my bed al naked,
 And lokèd forth, for I was wakèd
 With smalè foulès a gret hepe,
 That had affrayd me out of my slepe
 Through noyse and swetnesse of her song.
 And as me mette they sate a-mong
 Upon my chambre roof wyth-oute
 Upon the tyles over al a-boute, 300
 And songen, everich in his wyse,

284. *Macrobius*, famous in the Middle Ages for his commentary on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*.

The mostè solempnè servyse
 By note, that ever man, I trowe,
 Hadde herd ; for som of hem songe lowe
 Som hye, and al of oon acorde.
 To tellè shortly, at oo worde,
 Was never herd so swete a steven,—
 But hit hadde be a thyng of heven,—
 So mery a soun, so swete entunes,
 That certes, for the toun of Tewnès, 310
 I nolde but I hadde herd hem synge,
 For al my chambre gan to ryng
 Through syngyng of hir armonye.
 For instrument nor melodye
 Was nowher herd yet half so swete,
 Nor of acordè half so mete ;
 For ther was noon of hem that feynèd
 To synge, for ech of hem him peynèd
 To fynde out mery crafty notes ;
 They ne sparèd not hir throtes. 320

And sooth to seyn my chambre was
 Ful wel depeynted, and with glas
 Were al the wyndowes wel y-glasèd
 Ful clere, and nat an hole y-crasèd,
 That to beholde hit was gret joye ;
 For hoolly al the storie of Troye
 Was in the glasyng y-wroght thus,
 Of Ector, and of kyng Priamus ;
 Of Achilles, and of Lamedon,
 And eke of Medea and of Jasoun ; 330
 Of Paris, Eleyne, and of Lavyne ;
 And alle the wallès with colours fyne
 Were peynted, bothè text and glose,
 And al the Romaunce of the Rose.

My wyndowes weren shet echon
 And through the glas the sunnè shon
 Upon my bed with bryghtè bemès,
 With many gladè, gilden stremès ;
 And eek the welken was so fair,—
 Blew, bryght, clerè was the air, 340
 And ful attempre forsothe hit was ;
 For nother to cold nor hoot it nas,
 Ne in al the welkene was a clowde.

And as I lay thus, wonder lowde
 Me thoughte I herde an huntè blowe,
 Tassaye his horn, and for to knowe
 Whether hit were clere, or hors of soun.
 And I herde goyng, bothe up and downe ;

310. *Tewnès*, Tunis.

329. *of Lamedon*. All read *of kyng Lamedon*, caught from line above.

Men, hors, houndes, and other thyng,
And al men spoken of huntyng ; 350
How the wolde slee the hert with
strengthe,

And how the hert hadde upon lengthe
So moche embosed, I not now what.

Anoon right when I herdè that
How that they wolde on huntyng goon,
I was right glad and up anoon,
Took my hors and forth I wente
Out of my chambre, I never stente
Til I com to the feld withoute.
Ther overtok I a gret route 360
Of huntès and eek of foresteres,
With many relayes and lymeres,
And hyed hem to the forest faste,
And I with hem. So at the laste
I askèd oon, ladde a lymere,
'Say, felow, who shal huntè here ?'
Quod I ; and he answerde ageyn,
'Sir, themperour Octovyen,'
'Quod he, 'and is heer fastè by.'
'A goddes half, in good tyme !' quod I.
'Go we faste !' and gan to ryde. 371
Whan we came to the forest syde
Every man dide right anoon
As to huntyng fil to doon.

The mayster-hunte anoon, foot-hoot,
With a gret hornè blew three mot
At the uncouplyng of his houndès.
With-inne a whyl the hert y-founde is,
Y-halowed and rechasèd faste
Longè tymè ; so at the laste 380
This hert rusèd and stal away
Fro alle the houndes a prevy way.
The houndes had overshete hym alle,
And were on a defaute y-falle.
Therwyth the huntè wonder faste
Blew a 'forloyn' at the laste.

I was go walkèd fro my tree,
And as I wente ther cam by me
A whelp, that fawned me as I stood,
That hadde y-folwed and koude no good.
Hit com and crepte to me as lowe 391
Right as hit haddè me y-knowe,
Heeld down his heed and joyned his erès,

368. *Octovyen*, a favourite character in the Carolingian romances. There is a M. Engl. metrical romance *Octavian Imperator*. He was an Emperor of Rome who married Floraunce, daughter of Dagabars (*i.e.* Dagobert), king of France.

And leyde al smothè doun his herès.
I wolde have kaught hit, and anoon
Hit fleddè, and was fro me goon ;
And I him folwed, and hit forth wente
Doun by a floury grenè wente
Ful thikke of gras, ful softe and sweete,
With flourès fele, faire under feete, 400
And litel used, hit semèd thus ;
For bothè Flora and Zephirus,
They two that makè flourès growe,
Had mad hir dwellyng ther, I trowe ;
For hit was oon to be-holde,
As though the erthe envyè wolde
To be gayer than the heven,
To have no flourès sithès seven
As in the welknè sterrès be.
Hit had forgete the povertee 410
That wynter, through his coldè morwès,
Had made hit suffren, and his sorwès,
Al was for-geeten, and that was sene,
For al the wode was waxen grene ;
Swetnesse of dewe hadde mad hit waxe.

Hit is no need eek for to axe
Wher ther were many grenè grevès,
Or thikke of trees, so ful of levès ;
And every tree stood by him-selve,
Fro other wel ten feet or twelve. 420
So gretè trees, so huge of strengthe,
Of fourty, or fifty fadme lengthe,
Clene withoutè bough or stikke,
With croppès brode and eek as thikke,—
They werè nat an ynche a-sonder,—
That hit was shadwe over al under ;
And many an hert and many an hynde
Was bothe before me and be-hynde.

Of founès, sourès, bukkès, doès,
Was ful the wode ; and many roès, 430
And many squirellès, that sete
Ful heigh upon the trees and ete,
And in hir maner madè festès.
Shortly, hit was so ful of bestès,
That though Argus, the noble countour,

408. *sithes seven*. The MSS. read *swiche seven*, which makes no sense. The reading suggested, 'seven times more flowers than there are stars in heaven,' agrees with the 'd'estre miex estelée' in the *Rom. de la Rose* (ll. 8465-8468), from which these lines are copied.

435. *Argus*, Albus the Arab mathematician, fl. early in the 9th cent.; cp. *New Engl. Dict.* s.v. *Algorism*. Through his treatise on Algebra the Arabic or 'new' numerals became known in Europe.

Sete to rekene in his countour,
 And rekene with his figures ten—
 For by tho figures new al ken,
 If they be crafty, rekene and noubre
 And telle of every thinge the noubre,—
 Yet sholde he fayle to rekene even 447
 The wondres me mette in my sweven.

But forth they romed right wonder faste
 Doun the wode ; so at the laste
 I was war of a man in blak,
 That sat, and hadde y-turned his bak
 To an ooke, an hugé tree.

‘Lord!’ thoghte I, ‘who may that
 be ?

What ayleth hym to sitten here ?’
 Anoon right I wenté nere ; 450
 Than fond I sitte even upright
 A wonder wel-faryngé knyght,—
 By the maner me thoughté so,—
 Of good mochel, and right yong therto,
 Of the age of four and twenty year,
 Upon his berde but litel heer,
 And he was clothéd al in blake.

I stalkéd even unto his bake,
 And ther I stood as stille as ought,
 That, sooth to saye, he saw me nought ;
 For why he heng hys heed adoun, 461
 And with a deedly, sorwful soun
 He made of ryme ten vers or twelve
 Of a Complaynt to him-selve,
 The mosté pitee, the mosté routhe,
 That ever I herde ; for by my trouthe,
 Hit was gret wonder that Nature
 Myght suffren any creature
 To have swich sorw, and be not deed.
 Ful pitous, pale, and no-thing reed 470
 He sayde a lay, a maner song,
 Withouté note, withouté song ;
 And was this, for ful wel I kan
 Reherse hit—right thus hit began.—

*I have of sorwé so grete woon
 That joyé gete I never noon,
 Now that I see my lady bright,
 Which I have loved with al my myght,
 Is fro me deed and is a-noon.*

445. John of Gaunt, who was, however, twenty-nine when his wife died ; cp. l. 455.

479. Th. wrongly inserts *And thus in sorowe lefté me alone* after this line.

*Allas, Deeth, what ayleth thee 480
 That thou noldest have taken me,
 Whan thou toke my lady sweete
 That was so fayr, so fresh, so fre,
 So good, that men may wel se
 Of al goodnesse she had no meete.*

Whan he hadde mad thus his com-
 playnte,
 His sorwful herté gan fasté faynte,
 And his spirités wexen dede ;
 The blood was fled for puré drede 489
 Doun to his herté, to make hym warme ;
 For wel hit feled the herte hadde harme ;
 To wite eke why hit was a-drad
 By kynde, and for to make hit glad ;
 For hit is membre principal
 Of the body ; and that made al
 His hewé chaunge, and wexé grene,
 And pale, for ther no blood was sene
 In no maner lyme of his.

Anoon therwith whan I saw this,
 He ferde thus evel ther he seet, 500
 I went and stood right at his feet,
 And gretté hym, but he spak noght,
 But argued with his owné thoght
 And in his wit disputed faste,
 Why and how his lyf myght laste,—
 Hym thought his sorwés were so smerte
 And lay so colde upon his herte ;
 So, through his sorw and hevvy thoght,
 Made hym that he herde me noght
 For he had wel-nygh lost his mynde 510
 Thogh Pan, that men clepe god of
 kynde,

Were for his sorwés never so wrooth.

But at the last, to sayn right sooth,
 He was war of me how I stood
 Before hym, and did of myn hood,
 And hadde y-gret hym as I best coude.
 Debonayrly, and no thyng loude,
 He sayde, ‘I prey the be not wrooth ;
 I herde thee not, to seyn the sooth,
 Ne I saw thee not, sir, trewely.’ 520
 ‘A ! goodé sir, no fors,’ quod I,
 ‘I am right sory if I have ought
 Destroubled yow out of your thought ;
 For-yive me, if I have mis-take.’

‘Yis, thamendes is light to make,’

497. was. All read *is*.

Quod he, 'for ther lyth noon ther-to,
Ther is no thyng missayd nor do.'

Lo ! how goodly spak this knyght,
As hit hadde been a-nother wyght.
He made hit nouthur tough ne queynte,
And I saw that, and gan me aqueynte 537
With hym, and fond hym so tretable,
Right wonder skilful and reasonable,
As me thoghte, for al his bale ;
A-noon right I gan fynde a tale
To hym, to loke wher I might ought
Have moré knowyng of his thought.

'Sir,' quod I, 'this game is doon ;
I holdé that this hert be goon ;
Thise huntés conne hym nowher see.' 540

'I do no fors therof,' quod he,
'My thought is ther-on never a del.'

'Bi our Lord !' quod I, 'I trowe yow
wel,

Right so me thinketh bi your chere.
But, sir, oo thyng, wol ye here ?
Me thinketh in gret sorwe I yow see ;
But certés, siré, if that ye
Wolde ought discouré me your wo
I wolde, as wis God helpe me so,
Amende hit, if I can or may. 550

Ye mowé preve hit bi assay,
For, by my trouthe, to make yow hool,
I wol do al my power hool ;
And telleth me of your sorwés smerte,
Paraunter hit may ese your herte,
That semeth ful seke under your side.'

With that he loked on me aside,
As who sayth, 'Nay, that wol not be.'
'Graunt mercy ! goodé frend,' quod he,
'I thanke the that thou woldest so, 560
But hit may never the rather be do.

No man may my sorwé glade
That maketh my hewe to falle and fade,
And hath myn understandyng lorn,
That me is wo that I was born !
May noght make my sorwés slyde,—
Nought al the remedies of Ovyde ;
Ne Orpheus, god of melodye ;
Ne Dedalus, with his playés slye ;
Ne hele me may no phisicien, 570
Noght Ypocras, ne Galyen ;

Me is wo that I lyve hourés twelve,
But who so wol assay hym-selve,
Whether his herté can have pite
Of any sorwe, lat hym see me.
I, wrecche, that deeth hath mað al naked
Of all the blisse that ever was makéd ;
Y-worthé worsté of allé wightes,—
That hate my dayés and my nightes ;
My lyf, my lustés, be me lothe 580
For al welfare, and I be wrothe.
The puré Deeth is so ful my fo
That I wolde deye,—hit wol not so ;
For whan I solwe hit, hit wol flee ;
I wolde have hym, hit nyl nat me.

This is my peyne wythouté reed,
Alway deyinge and be not deed,
That Cesiphus, that lyth in helle,
May not of moré sorwé telle ;
And who-so wiste al, bi my trouthe, 590
My sorwé, but he haddé routhé
And pité of my sorwés smerte,
That man hath a feendly herte ;
For who so seeth me first on morwe
May seyén he hath met with Sorwe,
For I am Sorwe, and Sorwe is I.

'Allas ! and I wol telle the why ;
My song is turnéd to pleynnyng,
And al my laughter to wepyng,
My gladé thoghtes to hevynesse, 600
In travaille is myn ydelnesse,
And eek my reste ; my wele is wo,
My good is harm, and ever mo
In wrathe is turnéd my pleying,
And my delit in-to sorwyng.
Myn hele is turned in-to seeknesse,
In drede is al my sykernesse ;
To derke is turnéd al my light,
My wit is folly, my day is night,
My love is hate, my sleep wakyng, 610
My mirthe and melés is fastyng,
My countenaunce is nycete,
And al abaved wher-so I be.
My pees, in pledyng, and in werre.
Allas ! how myghte I faré werre ?

'My boldnesse is turnéd to shame,
For fals Fortune hath pleyd a game
Atte chess with me,—allas ! the while !

569. *his playés slye*, his ingeniously contrived, i.e. his artificial wings.

571. *Ypocras*, Hippocrates.

588. *Cesiphus*, Sisyphus.

598. *song*. All read *sorowe*, a contamination from l. 596.

The trayteresse fals, and ful of gyle,
 That al behoteth, and no thyng halt, 620
 She goth upright, and yet she halt,
 That baggeth foule, and loketh faire,
 The dispitousé deboñaire !
 That scorneth many a créature.
 An ydole of fals portrayture
 Is she, for she wol soné wrien.
 She is the monstres heed y-wrien,
 As filthé over y-strawed with flourès.
 Hir mosté worship and hir flou is
 To lyen, for that is hir nature ; 630
 With-outé feythe, lawe, or mesure,
 She is fals ; and ever laghyng
 With oon eye, and that other wepyng.
 That is broght up she set al down ;
 I likne hir to the scorpioun,
 That is a fals, flatteryng beste,
 For with his heed he maketh feste,
 But, al amydd his flatorynge,
 With his taylè he wol styng
 And envenyme ; and so wol she. 640
 She is thenvyousé Charite,
 That is ay fals, and semeth weel,
 So turneth she hir falsé wheel
 Abouté, for hit is no thyng stable,
 Now by the firé, now at table ;
 For many oon hath she thus y-blent.
 She is pley of enchauntément,
 That semeth oon, and is not so.
 The falsé theef ! what hath she do,
 Trowest thou ? By our Lord, I wol thee
 seye. 650

‘Atte ches with me she gan to pleye ;
 With hir falsé draughtes dyvers
 She stal on me, and took my fers ;
 And whan I saw my fers awaye,
 Allas ! I couthe no lenger pleye,
 But seyde, “Far-wel, swete, y-wys !
 And far-wel al that ever ther is !”
 Ther-with Fortuné seyde, “Chek heer !”
 And “Mate !” in the myd poynt of the
 chekkere, 660
 With a pouné erraunt, allas !
 Ful craftier to pley she was
 Than Athalus that made the game

651. *Atte*. All read *At the*.

662. *Athalus*. The reputed inventor of Chess.
 According to Warton *Attalus Philometer*, King
 of Perganius, is meant. This whole passage is
 imitated from the *Rom. de la Rose*, ll. 6644-6881.

First of the ches, so was his name.
 But God wolde, I had oones or twyes
 Y-coud and knowe the jeoparddyes
 That coude the Grek Pithagores,
 I shulde have pleyde the bet at ches,
 And kept my fers the bet ther-by.
 ‘And thogh wheieto ? For trewely
 I holde that wysh nat worth a stree ! 670
 If it had be never the bet for me,
 For Fortune can so many a wyle,
 Ther be but fewe can hir begyle,
 And eek she is the las to blame ;
 My-self I wolde have do the same,
 Before God, hadde I been as she.
 She oghte the more excuséd be
 For this. I say yet more ther-to,—
 Hadde I be God and myghte have do
 My willé, whan my fers she caughte, 680
 I wolde have drawe the samé draughte.
 For, also wys God yive me reste !
 I dai wel swere, she took the beste.

‘But through that draughte I have loin
 My blisse. Allas ! that I was born,
 For evermore I trowe trewely,
 For al my wil, my lust hoolly
 Is turned ; but yet, what to doone ?
 Be our Loide ! hit is to deye soone,
 For no thyng I leve hit noght, 690
 But lyve and deye right in this thought.
 For there nis planete in firmament
 Ne in ayre, ne in erthe, noon element
 That they ne yive me a yift echoon
 Of wepyng, whan I am alloon.
 For whan that I avise me wel,
 And be-thenke me every-del,
 How that ther lyth in rekenyng
 In my sorwé for no thyng ;
 And how ther leveth no gladnesse 700
 May gladdé me of my distresse,
 And how I have lost suffisance,
 And ther-to I have no plesance,
 Than may I say I have right noght.
 And whan al this falleth in my thought,
 Allas, than am I overcome !
 For that is doon is not to come :
 I have moie sorwé than Tantalé !’

665. *jeoparddyes*, problems ; O.F. *jeu parti*, a
 divided game.

681. *the same draughte*, move at chess.

698, 699. In my account with sorrow there lies
 to my credit no amount at all.

And whan I herde hym telle this tale
Thus pitously, as I yow telle, 719
Unnethé myghte I lenger dwelle,
Hit dide myn herté so moché wo.

'A, good sir!' quod I, 'say not so!
Have som pite on your nature,
That forméd yow to creature.
Remembre yow of Socrates,
For he ne counted nat three strees
Of noght that Fortune coude do.'

'No,' quod he, 'I can not so.'
'Why so, sir? yis, pardé!' quod I;
'Ne say noght soo, for trewely, 721
Thogh ye had lost the ferses twelve,
And ye for sorwe mordred your selve,
Ye sholde be dampned in this cas
Bi as good right as Medea was,
That slow hiñ children for Jason;
And Phyllis also for Demophon
Heng hir-selfe, so weylaway!
For he had broke his termé day
To come to hir. Another rage 730
Had Dydo, the quene cek of Cartage,
That slow hiñ self, for Eneas
Was fals; — which a foole she was.
And Ecuquo died, for Naucisus
Noldé nat love hiñ; and right thus
Hath many another folý don.
And for Dalida dyed Sampson,
That slow hym-self with a pilere,—
But ther is no man a-lyvè here
Wolde for a fers maké this wo!' 740

'Why so!' quod he, 'hyt ys nat so;
Thou wost ful lytel what thou menest;
I have lost moré than thou wenest.'
'Lo, sey, how that may be?' quod I;
'Good sir, tel me al hoolly
In what wyse, how, why, and wherfore,
That ye have thus your blissé loie.'

'Blythly,' quod he; 'com sit adoun!
I telle the upon a condicioun
That thou shalt hoolly with al thy wit 750

720. *sir*. All read *good syr*, contamination with *quod* in line above.

722. *the ferses twelve*, i.e. 'all the pieces except the king, which could not be taken.' (Skeat.)

727. Phyllis committed suicide from fear that Demophon had forgotten her, and was changed into a tree. Demophon was a son of Theseus.

734. *Ecuquo*, Echo. All these examples occur in the *Roman de la Rose*.

737. *Dalida*, Delilah.

Do thyn entent to herkene hit.'

'Yis, sir!'

'Swere thy trouthe ther-to.'

'Gladly.'

'Do than holde her-to.'

'I shal, right blythly, so God me save!
Hoolly with al the wit I have
Here yow as wel as I kan.'

'A Goddes half!' quod he, and began:
'Sir,' quod he, 'sith first I kouthé
Have any maner wit fro youthe,
Or kyndely understandyng 760
To comprehendé in any thyng
What love was in myn owné wit,
Dredeles I have ever yit
Be tributary and yiven rente
To love, hoolly with goode entente,
And through plesauce become his thral
With good wil, body, herte, and al.
Al this I putte in his servage,
As to my lorde, and dide homage,
And ful devoutly I prayde hym to, 770
He shulde besette myn herté so,
That hit plesancé to hym were,
And worship to my lady dere.

'And this was longe, and many a
yeer,
Oñ that myn heitè was set owher,
That I dide thus, and nysté why,
I trowe, hit cam me kyndely.
Peraunter I was therto most able,
As a whyt wal or a table,
For hit is redy to cacche and take 780
Al that men wil theynné make,
Whethir-so men wil portreie or peynte,
Be the werkés never so queynte.
'And thilké tyme I ferde right so
I was ablé to have lernéd tho,
And to have kenned as wel or better
Paraunter other art or letter,
But for love cam first in my thought,
Therefore I forgot hit nought.
I chees love to my firsté craft, 790
Therefore hit is with me laft.
For why? I took hit of so yong age
That malice haddé my corage
Nat that tyme turnéd to no thyng,
Through to mochel knowlechying.
For that tyme Youthé, my maistresse,
Governéd me in ydelnesse,

For hit was in my firste youthe,
And tho ful litel good I couthe,
For al my werkés were flittinge 800
That tyme, and thoghtés varyinge,
Al were to me ylyché good,
That I knew tho, but thus hit stood.

‘Hit happed that I cam on a day
In-to a place ther that I say
Trewly the fayrest companye
Of ladyes, that ever man with ye
Had seen to-gedres in oo place.
Shal I clepe hyt hap, other grace
That broghte me ther? Nay, but
Fortune, 810

That is to lye ful comune,—
The false trayteresse, pervers!
God wolde I could clepe hir wers!
For now she worceth me ful wo,
And I wol tellé sone why so.

‘Among these ladies thus echoon,
Soth to seyn, I sawgh oon
That was lyk noon of the route,
For I dar swere, withoute doute,
That as the someres sonnè bryght 820
Is fairer, clerer, and hath more lyght
Than any other planete in heven,
The monè, or the sterrès seven;
For al the worldè so had she
Surmounted hem alle of beaute,
Of maner, and of comlynesse,
Of stature, and of wel set gladnesse,
Of goodlihede, so wel be-seye,—
Shortly, what shal I more seye?
By God, and by his halwès twelve, 830
Hit was my swete, ryght as hir-selve!
She had so stedfast countenance,
So noble port and meyntenance.
And love, that had wel herd my bone,
Had espyèd me thus sone,
That she ful sonè, in my thought,
As helpe me God, so was y-caught
So sodenly, that I ne took
No maner counseyl, but at hir look
And at myn hertè; for-why, hir yèn 840
So gladly, I trow, myn hertè syen,
That purely tho myn ownè thought
Seyde hit were beter serve hir for noght

798. John of Gaunt was married at nineteen.
828. so. All read *and so*, caught from the line above.

830. By Christ and His twelve apostles.

Than with a-nother to be wel.
And it was sooth, for everydel
I wil a-noon right telle the why.

‘I saw hir daunce so comlyly,
Carole and synge so swetely,
Laughe and pleye so womanly,
And lokè so debonaily, 850
So goodly speke, and so friendly,
That certes, I trowe that ever-more
Nas seyn so blisful a tresore,
For every heer on hir hede,
Soth to seyn, it was not rede,
Ne nouthir yelw, ne broun it nas,
Me thoghtè most lyk gold it was.

‘And whiche yèn my lady hadde!
Debonair, goodè, glade, and sadde,
Symple, of goode mochel, noght to wyde,
Ther-to hir look nas not a-syde, 860
Ne overthwert, but beset so wel,
Hit drew and took up everydel
Alle that on hir gan be-holde.
Hir yèn semed anon she wolde
Have mercy,—foolès wenden so,—
But hit was never the rather do.
Hit nas no countrefeted thyng,
Hit was hir ownè pure loking,
That the goddessè, dame Nature, 870
Had made hem opene by mesure,
And close; for were she never so glad
Hir loking was not foly sprad,
Ne wildely, thogh that she pleyde;
But ever me thoghte hir yèn seyde,
“By God, my wrathe is al for-yive!”

‘Therwith hir liste so wel to live,
That dulnesse was of hir a-drad.
She nas to sobre, ne to glad.
In allè thyngès more mesure 880
Had never, I trowè, creature.
But many oon with hir loke she herte,
And that sat hir ful lyte at herte,
For she knew no-tyng of hir thought,
But whether she knew, or knew it noght,
Algate she ne roghte of hem a stree!
To gete hir love noo ner nas he
That woned at home, than he in Ynde,
The formest was alway behynde.
But goodè folke, over al other, 890
She loved as man may do his brother,
Of whiche love she was wonder large
In skilful places that berè charge.

‘But which a visage had she ther-to !
 Allas, myn herte is wonder wo
 That I ne can discryven hit !
 Me lakketh bothe English and wit
 For to un-do hit at the fulle,
 And eek my spirits be so dulle
 So greet a thyng for to devyse. 900
 I have no wit that can suffice
 To comprehend hir beautè,
 But thus moche dar I seyn, that she
 Was, rody, fresh, and lyvely hewed ;
 And every day hir beautè newed ;
 And negh hir face was alder-best ;
 For certès, Nature had swich lest
 To make that fair, that trewly she
 Was hir cheef patron of beautè,
 And cheef ensample of al hir werke, 910
 And moustre ; for be hit never so derke,
 Me thynketh I se hir ever-mo ;
 And yet, more-over, thogh allè tho
 That ever lyved were now a-lyve,
 They ne sholde have foundè to diskryve
 In al hir face a wikked signe ;
 For hit was sad, symple, and benygne.

‘And which a goodly, softè speche
 Had that swete, my lyvès leche !
 So friendly and so wel y-grounded, 920
 Up al resoun so wel y-founded,
 And so trefable to al gode,
 That I dar swere wel by the rode,
 Of eloquence was never founde
 So swete a sownyngè facounde,
 Ne trewer tonged, ne scornéd lasse,
 Ne bet coude hele ; that by the masse
 I durste swere, thogh the pope hit songe,
 That that was never yet through hir tonge
 Man ne woman gretly harméd, 930
 As for hir ther was al harm hyd ;
 Ne lassè flateryng in hir worde,
 That purèly hir symple recorde
 Was founde as trewe as any bonde,
 Or trouthe of any mannès honde.
 Ne chyde she koudè never a del,
 That knoweth al the world ful wel.

‘But swich a fairnesse of a nekke
 Had that swete, that boon nor brekke

904. All read *white*, *rody*, etc. Skeat omits *white*, for it spoils the point of l. 948 and the metre of this line.

915. All read *They*, which is necessary to the syntax.

Nas ther non senè that mys-sat ; 940
 Hit was smothe, streght, and purè flat,
 Wyth-outen hole ; nor canel boon,
 As be semyng, had she noon.
 Hir throte, as I have now memoire,
 Seméd a round tour of yvoire,
 Of good gretnesse, and noght to grete.

‘And godè, fairè, White, she hete,—
 That was my lady namè ryght,—
 She was bothe faire and bryght,
 She haddè not hir namè wrong. 950
 Right fairè shuldrès, and body long,
 She hadde, and armès, every lith
 Fattyssh, flesshy, not greet therwith ;
 Right whitè handes, and naylès rede,
 Roundè brestes ; and of good brede
 Hir hippès were, a streight flat bak.
 I knew on hir non other lak,
 That al hir lymmes nere pursewing,
 In as fer as I had knowyng.

‘Therto she coudè so wel pleye, 960
 Whan that hir lyste, that I dar seye
 That she was lyk to torchè bright
 That every man may take of light
 Ynogh, and hit hath never the lesse.

‘Of maner and of comlynesse,
 Right so ferde my lady dere,
 For every wyght of hir manere
 Myght cacche ynogh, if that he wolde,
 If he had yēn hir to be-holde ;
 For I dar swere wel if that she 970
 Hadde among ten thousand be,
 She woldè have be, at the leste,
 A cheef mirour of al the feste,
 Thogh they had stonden in a rowe,
 To mennès yēn that coude have knowe.
 For wher-so men had pleyed or wakèd,
 Me thoughte the felawship as naked
 Withouten hir, that saw I ones,
 As a coroune withoutè stones.
 Trewly she was to myn yē 980
 The soleyen fenix of Arabye,
 For ther lyveth never but oon ;
 Ne swich as she ne knew I noon.

‘To speke of goodnesse ; trewly she

941. All read *white*, *smothe*, etc.; cp. l. 904 note. Skeat here omits *pure*.

942. All read *or*.

947. A reference to the name of the Duchess, viz. *Blaunche*.

958. All read *pure sewing*.

Hadde as moche debonairet
 As ever hadde Hester in the Bible,
 And more, gif moré were possible.
 And soth to seyné, therwyth-al
 She had a wyt so general,
 So hool enclyned to allé gode, 990
 That al hir wyt was set, by the rode,
 With-oute malyce upon gladnesse;
 And ther-to I saw never yet a lesse
 Harmful than she was in doying.
 I sey nat that she ne had knowyng
 What harm was, or ellés she
 Had coud no good, so thynketh me.

‘And trewly, for to speke of trouthe,
 But she hadde had, it hadde be routhe.
 Therof she had so moche hir del, 1000
 And I dar seyn, and swere hit wel,
 That Trouthe hym-self, over al and al,
 Had chose his maner principal
 In hir, that was his restyng-place.
 Ther-to she hadde the mosté grace
 To have stedfast perseverance
 An esy, atcmpe governaunce,
 That ever I knew, or wysté yit,
 So puré, suffraunt, was hir wyt.
 And resoun gladly she understood; 1010
 Hit folowed wel she coudé good.
 She uséd gladly to do wel;
 These were hir maners everydel.

‘Therwith she lovéd so wel right,
 She wrong do woldé to no wyght;
 Nó wyght myghte do hir no shame,
 She loved so wel hir owné name.
 Hir luste to holde no wyght in honde,
 Ne, be thou siker, she wolde not
 fonde

To holdé no wyght in balaunce 1020
 By half word, ne by countenaunce,
 But if men wolde upon hir lye;
 Ne sende men in-to Walakye,
 To Pruyse, and in-to Tartarye,
 To Alysandre, ne in-to Turkye;
 And bidde hym faste, anon that he
 Go hoodles in-to the dryé se,

986. *Hester*, Esther.1024. *Pruyse*, Prussia.

1027. *the drye se*. According to Mr. Brae
 (Appendix to his ed. of Chaucer's *Astrolabe*, p.
 107) this refers to the variable Lake Czirknitz,
 near Laibach, N.E. of Trieste, which is some-
 times dry.

And come hoom by the Carrenare;
 And seyé, “Sir, be now right ware
 That I may of yow heré seyn 1030
 Worship, or that ye come ageyn!”
 She ne uséd no suche knakkés smale.

‘But wherfor that I telle my tale?
 Right on this same, as I have seyde,
 Was hoolly al my lové leyde,
 For certés, she was, that sweté wyf
 My suffisauncé, my lust, my lyf,
 Myn hap, myn hele, and al my blisse,
 My worldes welfare, and my [goodé lisse,]
 And I hoolly hirs, and everydel.’ 1040

‘By our Lord,’ quod I, ‘I trowe yow
 wel!

Hardely, your love was wel beset,
 I not how ye myghte have do bet.’

‘Bet? ne noght so wel!’ quod he.

‘I trowe hit, sir,’ quod I, ‘parde!’

‘Nay, leve hit wel!’

‘Sire, so do I;

I leve yow wel, that trewely
 Yow thoghté that she was the beste,
 And to be-holde the alderfayreste, 1049
 Who so had loked hir with your eyen’—

‘With myn? nay, allé that hir seyen
 Seyde, and sworn hyt was so.
 And thogh they ne hadde, I woldé tho
 Have lovéd best my lady fre,
 Thogh I hadde had al the beauté
 That ever hadde Alcipyades,
 And al the strengthe of Ercules,
 And therto hadde the worthynesse
 Of Alysandre, and al the rychesse
 That ever was in Babyloyné, 1060
 In Cartage, or in Macedoyné,
 Or in Rome, or in Nynyvè;
 And therto also as hardy be
 As was Ector, so have I joye,
 That Achilles slow at Troye,—
 And ther-for was he slayn also
 In a temple, for bothé two
 Were slayn, he and Antylegyus,

1028. Mr. Brae suggests that this is the Gulf
 of Carnaro or Quararo in the Adriatic to which
 Dante refers; cp. *Inf.* ix. 113. It is within 40
 miles of Lake Czirknitz.

1039. *goode lisse*. All read *goddesse*. Skeat
lisse.

1056. *Alcipyades*, Alcibiades.

1068. *Antylegyus*, Antiochus.

And so seyth Dares Frigius,
For lovè of Polixena,— 1070
Or ben as wys as Mynerva,
I wolde ever, withoutè drede,
Have loved hir, for I mostè nede !

“Nede !” nay, trewly, I gabbè
now,—

Noght “nede,” and I wol tellè how,
For of good wille myn herte it wolde,
And eek to love hir I was holde,
As for the faireste and the beste.

‘She was as good, so have I reste,
As ever was Penelope of Grece, 1080
Or as the noble wyf Lucrece,
That was the beste,—he telleth thus
The Romayn, Tytus Lyvyus,—
She was as good, and no thyng lyke,
Thogh hir stories be autentyke ;
Algate she was as trewe as she.

‘But wherfor that I tellè the
Whan I first my lady say ?
I was right yong, soth to say,
And ful greet need I hadde to lerne 1090
Whan my hertè woldè yern

To love, it was a greet emprise ;
But as my wyt coude beste suffise,
After my yongè, childly wyt,
Withoute drede, I be-settè hit
To love hir in my bestè wyse,
To do hir worship, and the servise.
That I coude tho, by my trouthe,
Withoutè feynyng, outhur slouthe,
For wonder fayn I wolde hir se. 1100

‘So mochel hit amended me,
That whan I saw hir first a-morwe,
I was warished of al my sorwe
Of al day after, til hit were eve ;
Me thoghtè no-thing myghte me greve,
Were my sorwès never so smerte ;
And yet she syt so in myn herte,
That by my trouthe, I noldè noght,
For al this worlde, out of my thoght
Levé my lady ; no, trewely !’ 1110

1069. Dares Phrygius, the Trojan priest of Vulcan, in whose name the popular spurious history of Troy was written by a Roman after the fall of Rome. The reference here, however, is to the mediæval version of the story, written by Guido delle Colonne, which was based on Benoit de Sainte-Maure’s *Roman de Troie*.

1039. Possibly, as Skeat thinks, *the* has been omitted before *soth*, but cp. l. 1180.

‘Now, by my trouthe, sir,’ quod I,
‘Me thynketh ye have such a chaunce,
As shrift wythoutè répentance.’

“Répentance !” nay, fy !’ quod he,
‘Shulde I now repentè me
To love ? nay, certès, than were I wel
Wers than was Achitofel,

Or Anthenor, so have I joye,
The traytour that betraysed Troye,
Or the falsè Genellon, 1120
He that purchased the treson
Of Rowland and of Olyvere.
Nay, whil I am a-lyvè here
I nyl foryete hir, never mo !’

‘Now, goodè sirè,’ quod I tho,
‘Ye han wel told me her-before,
Hit is no need to reherse hit more
How ye sawe hir first, and where ;
But wolde ye telle me the manere
To hir which was your firstè speche,—
Therof I woldè yow be-seche,— 1130
And how she knewè first your thoght,
Whether ye lovèd hir or noght,
And telleth me eek what ye have lore,
I herde yow tellè her-before.’

‘Ye,’ seyde he, ‘thou nost what
thou menest ;
I have lost morè than thou wenest.’

‘What los is that ?’ quod I tho ;
‘Nyl she not love yow ? is hit so ?
Or have ye oght doon amys, 1140
That she hath left yow ? is it this ?
For Goddès lovè, telle me al.’

‘Be-fore God,’ quod he, ‘and I shal.
I sayè right as I have seyde,
On hir was al my lovè leyde,
And yet she nyste it never a del
Noght longè tymè, leve it wel !
For be right siker, I durstè noght,
For al this worlde, tel hir my thoght,
Ne I wolde have wratthed hir trewely.
For wostow why ? she was lady 1150
Of the body,—she had the herte,
And who hath that may not asterte.

‘But, for to kepe me fro ydelnesse,

1120. *Genellon*, one of Charlemagne’s officers, whose treachery caused the defeat at Roncevaux and the death of Roland.

1122. *Rowland and Oliver*, the two most celebrated of Charlemagne’s knights.

1146. All read *not never*.

Trewly I did my besynesse
 To makè songes, as I best coude ;
 And oftē tyme I song hem loude,
 And madè songes thus a greet del,
 Al thogh I coude not make so wel
 Songès, ne knowè the art al 1160
 As coude Lamekes sone, Tubal,
 That fond out first the art of songe ;—
 For 'as his brothres hamers ronge
 Upon his anvelt up and doun
 Therof he took the firstè soun ;
 But Grekès seyn Pictagoras,
 That he the firstè fynder was
 Of the art, *Aurora* telleth so ;
 But therof no fors, of hem two.
 Algatès, songès thus I made 1170
 Of my felyng, myn herte to glade.
 And lo ! this was the alther-firste,—
 I not wher it were the werste.

*Lorde, hyt maketh myn hwetè lyght
 Whan I thenke on that swetè wyght
 That is so semely on to see ;
 And wisshe to God it myght so bee
 That she wolde holde me for hir knyght,
 My lady that is so fair and bright !*

' Now have I told the, soth to saye,
 My firstè song. Upon a daye 1181
 I be-thoghtè me what wo
 And sorwè that I suffrèd tho
 For hir, and yet she wyste it noght,
 Ne telle hir durste I nat my thought.
 Allas ! thoghte I, I can no reed ;
 And but I telle hir I nam but deed,
 And if I telle hir, to seye right sooth,
 I am a-dred she wol be wrooth.
 Allas ! what shal I thannè do ? 1190

' In this debat I was so wo,
 Me thoghte myn hertè braste a-tweyn !
 So at the lastè, soth to sayn,
 I be-thoghte me that Nature
 Ne formèd never in créature
 So mochè beaute, trewely,
 And bountè, wyth-oute mercy.

1161. *Tubal*, an error for Jubal, 'the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.'

1166. *Pictagoras*, Pythagoras.

1168. *Aurora*, a Latin metrical version of parts of the Bible allegorised by Petrus de Riga, Canon of Rheims, in the 12th century.

1172. *the alther-firste*. All omit *the*, but the *rime* proves the necessity of the demonstrative.

' In hope of that my tale I tolde
 With sorwe, as that I never sholde
 For nedès ; and, maugree my heed, 1200
 I moste have told hir or be deed.
 I not wel how that I began,
 Ful evel rehersen hit I can,
 And eek, as helpe me God, with-al
 I trowe hit was in the dismal
 That was the ten woundes of Egipte,
 For many a word I over-skipte
 In my tale, for purè fere
 Lest my worldès mys-set were,
 With sorwful herte, and woundès dede,
 Softe, and quakyng for purè drede 1211
 And shame, and styntyng in my tale
 For ferdè, and myn hewe al pale,
 Ful ofte I wex bothe pale and reed ;
 Bowyng to hir, I heng the heed,
 I durste nat onès loke hir on,
 For wit, manere, and al was goon.
 I seyde "Mercy !" and no more.
 Hit nas no game, hit sat me sore.

' So at the lastè, sooth to seyn, 1220
 Whan that myn herte was come ageyn,
 To tellè shortly al my speche,
 With hool herte I gan hir besече
 That she wolde be my lady swete ;
 And swor, and gan hir hertely hete
 Ever to be stedfast and trewe,
 And love hir alwey freshly newe,
 And never other lady have,
 And al hir worship for to save
 As I best coude,—I swor hir this,— 1230
 "For youres is al that ever ther is
 For evermore, myn hertè swete !
 And never to false yow, but I mete,
 I nyl, as wys God helpe me so !"

' And whan I hadde my tale y-do,
 God wot she accounted nat a stree
 Of al my tale, so thoghtè me.
 To tellè shortly, right as it is,
 Trewly hir answeere hit was this ;
 I can not now wel counterfete 1240
 Hir wordès, but this was the grete
 Of hir answeere : she sayde, "Nay !" *Al-outerly*. Allas ! that day
 The sorwe I suffred and the wo,

1205. *dismal*, on an evil day ; Anglo-French *d's mal* (Lat. *dies mali*). The form of the word caused it to be used as an adjective later.

That trewly Cassandra, that so
Bewayléd the destruccioun
Of Troyè and of Ilioun,
Had never swich sorwe as I tho.
I durste no morè say ther-to
For purè fere, but stal away ; 1250
And thus I lyved ful many a day,
That trewely, I hadde no need,
Ferther than my beddès heed,
Never a day to sechè sorwe ;
I fond hit redy every morwe,
For why I loved hir in no gere.

‘So hit befel another yere,
I thoughtè ones I woldè fonde
To do hir knowe and understonde
My wo ; and she wel understood 1260
That I ne wilned no thyng but good,
And worship, and to kepe hir name
Over allè thyng, and drede hir shame,
And was so besy hir to serve,
And pite were I shuldè sterve,
Sith that I wilned noon harm y-wys.

‘So whan my lady knew al this,
My lady yaf me al hoolly
The noble yift of hir mercy,
Savyng hir worship by al weyes ; 1270
Dredles, I mene noon other weyes.
And therwith she yaf me a ryng,
I trowe hit was the firstè thyng ;
But if myn hertè was y-waxe
Glad, that is no need to axe !
As helpe me God, I was as blyve
Reyscd, as fro dethe to lyve,
Of al happès the alder-beste,
The gladdest, and the moste at reste.
For trewely that sweté wyght 1280
Whan I hadde wrong and she the right,
She wolde alway so goodely
For-yeve me so debonairly !
In alle my youthe, in allè chaunce
She took me in hir governaunce.

‘Therwyth she was alway so trewe
Our joye was ever y-lichè newe,
Our hertès wern so even a payre
That never nas that oon contraire
To that other, for no wo ; 1290
For sothe y-liche they suffred tho
Oo blysse, and eek oo sorwè bothe ;

1261. *thyng*. All read *thynges*, unidiomatically.

Y-liche they were bothe gladde and wrothe,
Al was us oon withoutè were.

And thus we lyved ful many a yere
So wel, I can nat tellè how.’

‘Sir,’ quod I, ‘wher is she now ?’
‘“Now !”’ quod he, and stynte anoon.
Therwith he wex as deed as stoon
And seyde, ‘Allas, that I was bore ! 1300
That was the los, that her-before
I toldè the that I hadde lorn ;
Bethenk how I seyde herbeforen ;
“Thow worst ful litel what thou menest ;
I have lost morè than thou wenest !”
God wot, allas ! right that was she !’

‘Allas ! sir, how ? what may that be ?’
‘She ys deed !’

‘Nay !’

‘Yis, by my trouthe !’

‘Is that your los ? by God, hit is
routhe !’

And with that wordè right anoon 1310
They gan to strake forth ; al was doon
For that tyme, the hert-huntyng.

With that me thoughtè that this kyng
Gán homwardès for to ryde,
Unto a place was ther besyde,
Which was from us but a lyte ;
A long castel with wallès white
Be Seynt Johan ! on a richè hil,
As me mette ; but thus hyt fil.

Ryght thus me mette, as I yow telle, 1320
That in the castell ther was a belle,
As hit hadde smyten hourès twelve.

Therewyth I a-wook my selve
And fond me lying in my bed ;
And the book that I hadde red,
Of Alcyone and Seys the kyng,
And of the goddès of slepyng,
I fond it in myn honde ful even.

Thoghte I, ‘This is so queynt a sweven,
That I wol, be processe of tyme, 1330
Fonde to putte this sweven in ryme
As I can best’ ; and that anoon.
This was my sweven ; now hit is doon !

1314. All read *Gan homward*, which seems
to make the line too short.

1317. *A long castel*, presumably Windsor.

THE COMPLEYNTE UNTO PITE

*Complainte of the Deathe of Pitie, in
Stowe's hand.*

PITÈ that I have sought so yore ago
With hertè sore and ful of besy peyne,
That in this worlde was never wight so wo
With-outè dethe; and if I shal not feyne,
My purpos was to Pite to compleyne
Upon the crueltee and tyrannye
Of Love, that for my trouthe doth me dye.

And when that I, by lengthe of certeyn
yeres,
Had evere in oon a tymè sought to speke,
To Pite ran I, al bespreynt with teres, 10
To preyen hir on Crueltee me a wreke;
But er I myght with any worde out-breke,
Or tellen any of my peynès smerte,
I fond hir deed and buried in an herte.

Adoun fel I when that I saugh the herse,
Deed as a stoon, whyl that the swogh me
laste;

But up I roos with colour ful dyverse,
And pitously on hir myn eyen I caste,
And ner the corps I gan to presen faste,
And for the soule I shoop me for to
preye; 20
I nas but lorne, ther was no more to sey.

Thus àm I slayn sith that Pitè is deed;
Allas the day! that ever hit shulde falle!
What maner man dar now holde up his
heed?

To whom shal any sorwful hertè calle?
Now Crueltee hath cast to sleen us alle,
In ydel hope, folk redèlees of peyne,—
Sith she is deed, to whom shul we compleyne?

But yet encreseth me this wonder newe, 29
That no wight woot that she is deed but I;
So many men as in her tyme hir knewe,
And yet she dyéd not so sodeynly;
For I have sought hir ever ful besily
Sith I first haddè wit or mannès mynde;
But she was deed er that I coude hir fynde.

21. *nas.* All read *was*.

Aboutè hir herse ther stoden lustily,
Withouten any wo, as thoughtè me,
Bountee parfit, wel-armed and richely,
And fresshè Beautee, Lust and Jolitee,
Assured Maner, Youthe and Honestee, 40
Wisdom, Estaat, and Dreed, and Govern-
aunce,
Confedred bothe by bonde and alliaunce.

A compleynte hadde I writen in myn
hond,
For to have put to Pite as a bille;
But whan I al this companye ther fond,
That rather wolden al my causè spille
Than do me help, I held my pleynè stille;
For to tho folk, with-outen any faile,
Withoutè Pite may no bille availè.

Then leve I al thise vertues, sauf Pitè, 50
Keping the corps, as ye have herd meseyn,
Cofedred alle by bonde of Cruelte,
And ben assented that I shal be sleyn.
And I have put my Compleynte up ageyn;
For to my foes my bille I dar not shewe,
Theffect of which seith thus in wordès fewe.

The Bille

Humblest of herte, highest of reverence,
Benygnè flour, coroune of vertues alle!
Sheweth un-to your rial excellence
Your servaunt, if I durstè me so calle, 60
His mortal harm in which he is y-falle;
And noght al only for his evel fare,
But for your renoun, as he shal declare.

Hit stondeth thus, your contraire
Crueltee
Allyed is ageynst your regalye,
Under colour of womanly Beautee,—
For men ne shulde not knowe hir
tyrannye,—
With Bountee, Gentillesse, and Curtesye,
And hath depryvd yow now of your place,
That highte 'Beautee apertenant to
Grace.' 70

41. All omit *and* after *Estaat*; Ten Brink supplies it.

67. All omit *ne*, which Ten Brink supplies.

For kyndly, by your heritagé right,
Ye been annexéd ever unto Bountee,
And verrayly ye oughté do your myght
To helpé Trouthe in his adversitee.
Ye been also the coroune of Beautee,
And certes, if ye wanten in thise tweyne
The world is lore; ther nis no more to seyne.

Eek what availeth Maner and Gentilesse
Withouté you, benygné creature !
Shal Cruelte be your governeresse ? 80
Allas ! what herté may hit long endure ?
Wherfor but ye the rather také cure
To breké that perilous alliaunce,
Ye sleen hem that ben in your obeisaunce.

And further over, if ye suffre this,
Your renoun is fordo than in a throwe ;
Ther shal no man wite wel what Pite is.
Allas ! that your renoun shoulde besolowe ;
Ye be than fro your heritage y-throwe
By Cruelte, that occupieth your place, 90
And we despaired that seken to your grace.

Have mercy on me, thou serenous quene,
That you have sought so tenderly and yore,
Let som stream of your light on me be sene,
That love and drede yow ever lenger the
more ;

For, sothly for to seyne, I bere the sore,
And though I benot cunnyng for to pleyne,
For Goddés love, have mercy on my peyne !

My peyne is this, that what-so I desire, 99
That have I not, ne no thing lyk therto ;
And ever set Desire myn herte on fire,
Eek on that other syde where-so I go.
What maner thinge that may encrese my wo
That have I redy, unsoght, everywhere,
Me ne lakketh but my deth, and than my
bere.

What nedeth to shewé parcel of my
peyne,
Sith every wo that herté may be-thyneke,
I suffre ? And yet I dar not to you pleyne,
For wel I woot, although I wake or wynke,
Ye rekké not whether I flete or synke 110

92. *serenous*, Mr. Liddell's emendation for *herenus*, *herenus*, and *vertuouse*, of the MSS.
105. All omit *ne*.

But nathêles, my trouthe I shal sustene
Unto my deth, and that shal wel be sene.

This is to seyne, I wol be yourés ever ;
Though ye me slee by Cruelte your fo,
Algate my spirit shal never dissever
Fro your servyse, for any peyne or wo !
Sith ye be deed,—allas ! that hit is so !—
Thus for your deth I may wel wepe and
pleyne

With herté sore, and ful of besy peyne !

*Here endeth the exclamacion of the Deth
of Pyte.*

CHAUCER'S A B C

*Incipit carmen secundum ordinem
Litterarum alphabeti.*

Al myghty and al mercyable Queene,
To whom that al this world fleeth for socour
To have relees of sinne, of sorwe, and teene !
Glorious Virgine, of allé flourés flour,
To thee I flee confounded in errour.
Help, and releve, thou mihti debonayre,
Have mercy on my perilous langour !
Venquished me hath my cruel adversaire.

Bountee so fix hath in thyn herte his
tente,
That wel I wot, thou wolt my socour be ;
Thou canst not warne him that with good
entente 11

Axeth thyn helpe, thyn herte is ay so free !
Thou art largesse of pleyn felicitée,
Haven of refute, of quiete, and of reste.
Loo ! how that theevés seven chasen mee !
Help ! Lady bryght, er that my ship to-
breste !

Comfort is noon, but in you, Ladi deere !
For loo, my sinne and my confusioun,
Which oughten not in thy presence appeere,
Han take on me a grevous accioun 20
Of verrey right and desperacioun !
And as bi right they mighten wel sustene
That I were worthy my dampnacioun,
Nere merci of you, blisful havené Queene !

Doute is ther noon, Queen of miseri-
corde,
That thou nart cause of grace and merci
here ;

God vouchéd-sauf thurgh thee with us to
accorde.

For certès, Crystès blisful mooder dere,
Were now the bowè bent in swich manere
As it was first, of justice and of ire, 30
The rightful God nolde of no mercy here ;
But thurgh thee han we grace as we desire.

Everhath myn hope of refut been in thee,
For heer-biforn ful ofte in many a wyse
Hast thou to misericorde resceyvèd me ;
But merci, Lady at the grete assyse,
Whan we schul come before the hye justyse !
So litel fruit shal thanne in me be founde
That, but thou er that day me wel chastyse,
Of verrey right my werk wol me confounde.

Fleeing, I flee for socour to thy tente 41
Me for to hide from tempest ful of drede,
Biseeching you that ye you not absente
Though I bewikke; Ohelpyit at this neede!
Al have I ben a beste in wille and deede,
Yit, Lady, thou me clothè with thy grace.
Thyn enemy and myn, Lady, tak heede,
Un-to my deth in poynt is me to chace !

Glorious mayde and moder which that
never 49

Were bitter, neither in erthè nor in sec,
But ful of swetnesse and of merci ever,
Help that my Fader be not wroth with me !
Spek thou, for I ne dar not him y-see,
So have I doon in erthe, allas the while !
That certès, but if thou my socour be
To stynk eterne he wol my gost exile !

He vouchéd-sauf, tel him, as was his
wille

Bicome a man to have our alliaunce,
And with his precious blood he wrot the
bille

Up-on the crois as general acquitaunce
To every penitent in ful creauce. 61
And therfor, Lady bright, thou for us praye !
Thanne shalt thou bothè stinte al his
grevauce,

And make our soo to failen of his praye.

Iwot it wel thou wolt ben our socour,
Thou art so ful of bountee in certeyn ;
For whan a soulè falleth in errour
Thi pitee goth and haleth him ageyn.
Thanne makest thou his pees with his
sovereyn,

And bringest him out of the crooked strete.

Who-so thee loveth he shal not love in
veyne : 71

That shal he fynde as he the lyf shal lete.
Kalenderès enlumynèd ben they
That in this world ben lighted with thy
name,

And who-so goth to yow the rihtè wey,
Him thar not drede in soulè to be lame.
Now, Queen of comfort ! sith thou art
that same

To whom I seché for my medicyne,
Lat not my foono more my wounde entame,
Myn hele in-to thyn hand al I resigne. 80

Lady, thi sorwè kan I not portreye
Under the cros, ne his grevous penaunce,
But for your bothès peynès I yow preye,
Lat not our alder soo make his bobaunce
That he hath in his listès of mischaunce
Convict that ye bothe have bought so dere.
As I seide erst, thou ground of our
substaunce

Continue on us thy pitous eyen clere.

Moises that saugh the bush with
flaumès rede 89

Brenninge, of whichè never a stikkè brende,
Wassigne of thyn unwemmèd maiden hede ;
Thou art the bush on which ther gan
descende

The Holy Goost, the which that Moyses
wende

Had ben a-fyr ; and this was in figure.
Now, Lady, from the fyr thou us defende
Which that in helle eternally shal dure.

Nobleprincesse that never haddest pere !

Certès, if any comfort in us be
That cometh of thee, thou Cristès moder
deere,

We han noon other melodye or glee 100
Us to rejoyse in our adversitee,
Ne advocat noon that wol and dar so preye
For us, and that for litel hire as ye,
That helpen for an Ave Marie or tweye.

O verrey light of eyen that ben blynde !
O verrey lust of labour and distresse !
O tresorere of bountee to mankynde !
Thee whom God ches to moder for
humblesse !

From his ancille he madè thee maistresse
Of hevène and erthe, our bille up for
to bede.

This world awaiteth ever on thy goodnesse,
For thou ne failest never wight at nede.

Purpos I have sum tymé for to enquire
Wherfore and why the Holy Gost the
soughte,

Whan Gabriellés vois cam to thyn ere;
He not to werre us swich a wunder
wroughte,

But for to save us that he sithen boughte;
Than needeth us no wepen us for to save,
But ononly ther we did not as us oughte,—
Do penitence, and merci axe and have. 120

Queen of comfort ! yit whan I me bi-
thinke

That I agilt have bothé him and thee,
And that my soule is wurthi for to sinke,
Allas ! I caitif, whider may I flee ?
Who shal un-to thi Sone my mené lee ?
Who, but thy-self, that art of pitee welle ?
Thou hast more reuthe on our adversitee
Than in this world mighte any tungé telle.

Redressé me, moder, and me chastise,
For certeynly my Fadres chastisyng 130
That dar I nought abiden in no wise,
So hidous is hys rightful rekenyng.
Moder, of whom our merci gan to spryng,
Beth ye my juge and eek my soulés leche,
For ever in you is pitee haboundyng
To eche that wol of pitee you biseche.

Soth is that God ne granteth no pitee
With-outé thee ; for God, of his goodnesse,
Foryiveth noon, but it like un-to thee ;
He hath thee makéd vicaire and
maistresse 140

Of al the world, and eek governeresse
Of hevenc, and he represseth his justise
After thy wille, and therfore in witnesse,
He hath thee crownéd in so ryal wise.

Temple devout, ther God hath his
wonyng

Fro which these misbileved deprived
been,

To you my soulé penitent I byng.
Resceyvè me,—I can no farther flee.
With thornés venymous, O hevené Queen !
For which the crthe acurséd was ful yore.
I am so wounded as ye may wel seen 151
That I am lost almost, it smert so sorc.

Virgine, that art so noble of appaile,
And ledest us in-to the hyé tour

Of paradys, thou me wisse and counsaile
How I may have thy grace and thy socour,
Al have I ben in filthe and in errour.

Lady, un-to that court thou me ajourne
That clepéd is thy bench, O freshé flour
Ther as that merci evere shal sojourne. 160

Xristus, thi sone, that in this world
alighte

Up-on the cros to suffre his passioun,
Eek suffréd that Longiús his herté prihte,
And made his herté blood to renne adoun,
And al was this for my salvacioun,
And I to hym am fals and eek unkynde,
And yit he wol not my dampnacioun ;
This thanke I you, socour of al mankynde !

Ysaac was figure of his deth certeyn,
That so fer forth his fader wolde obeye, 170
That him ne rouhté no thing to be slayn ;
Right soo thy Sone lust as a lamb to deye.
Now, Lady ful of mercy ! I you preye,
Sithe he his mercy mesuréd so large,
Be ye not skant, for alle we singe and seye
That ye ben from vengeauncé ayoure targe.

Zacharie you clepeth the opené welle,
To wasshé sinful soule out of his gilt ;
Therfore this lessoun ought I wel to telle,
That nere thy tender herte we weren spilt.
Now, Lady brihté, sith thou canst and wilt,
Ben to the seed of Adam merciabe,
So bring us to that palais that is bilt
To penitents that ben to mercy able.

Amen.

Explicit carmen.

THE COMPLEYNTE OF MARS

The Proem

'GLADETH, ye foulés, of the morwé
gray !

Lo, Venus, risen among you rowés rede !
And flourés fresshe, honoureth ye this day ;
For when the sonne uprist, then wol ye
sprede.

163. All read *And* at the beginning of this line, destroying the syntax of the stanza. It is clearly caught from the lines below. All read *prihte* for *prighte*, which is Skeat's suggestion ; *prihte* does not mean 'pierced'.

2. *Venus*, the planet which sometimes rises in the morning.

But ye lovers, that lye in any drede,
Fleeth, lest wikked tonges yow espye !
Lo yond the sonne, the candel of jelosye !

' Wyth terès blewē, and with a
wounded herte,
Taket h your leve ; and with Seynt John
to borwe, 9
Apeseth somewhat of your sorwès smerte,
Tyme cometh eft that cesè shal your
sorwe ;
The gladdē nyght is worth an hevye morwe !'
(Seynt Valentyne ! a foul thus herde I synge
Upon thy day, er sonnè gan up-sprynge.)

Yet sang this foul, ' I rede yow alle a-
wake,
And yet that han not chosen in humblè wyse,
With-out repentynge cheseth yow your
make ;
And ye that han ful chosen as I devyse,
Yet at the leste renoveleth your servyse ;
Confermeth hit perpetuely to dure, 20
And paciently taketh your aventure.'

And for the worship of this highè feste,
Yet wol I, in my briddè wisè, synge
The sentence of the compleynt at the leste
That woful Mars made attè departynge
Fro fresshè Venus, in a morwenynge
Whan Phebus, with his firy torchès rede,
Ransakéd every lover in his drede.

Whilom the thriddè hevenès lord above,
As wel by hevenysh revolucioun 30
As by desert, hath wonne Venus, his love,
And she hath take him in subjeccioun,
And as a maistresse taught him his lessoun,
Commaundyng him that never, in her
servyse,
He nere so bold no lover to despyse.

For she forbad him jelosye at alle,
And crueltee, and host, and tyrannye ;
She made hym at hir lust so humble and
talle,
That when hir deyned caste on hym her ye,
He took in pacience to lyve or dye ; 40

9. *Seynt John*, the apostle of truth.
31. All read *his* except Harl., which omits
the word.

And thus she brydeleth him in hir manere,
With no-thing but with scourgyng of hir
chere.

Who regneth now in blissè but Venus,
That hath this worthy knyght in govern-
aunce ?

Who syngeth now but Mars, that serveth
thus

The fairè Venus, causer of plesaunce ?
He bynt him to perpetual obeisaunce,
And she bynt hir to loven him for ever,
But so be that his trespas hit dissever.

Thus be they knyt, and regnen as in
heven 50

Be loking most ; til hit fil on a tyde
That by her bothe assent was set a steven
That Mars shal entre, as fast as he may
glyde,

Into hir nextè paleys, and abyde,
Walkyng his courstil she hadde him a-take ;
And he preysde hir to haste hir for his sake.

Then seyde he thus, ' Myn hertès lady
swete

Ye knowè wel my myschef in that place ;
For sikerly, til that I with yow mete,
My lyf stant ther in aventure and grace, 60
But when I se the beautee of your face,
Ther nis no drede of deth may domesmerde,
For al your lust is esè to myn herte.'

She hath so gret compassion of hir knyght
That dwelleth in solitudè til she come,—
For hit stood so, that ilkè tyme, no wyght
Counseyldè hym, ne seyde to him wel-
come,—

That nygh her wit for sorwe was overcome ;
Wherfor she spedde hir as faste in her weye
Almost in oon day as he dide in tweye. 70

The gretè joye that was betwix hem two
When they bemet, ther may no tungè telle ;
Ther is no more, but unto bed they go ;
And thus in joye and blisse I let hem dwelle ;
This worthi Mars, that is of knyghthod
welle,

62. *nis*. All read *is*.

70. The orbit of Venus is smaller than that of
Mars, so her apparent motion is twice as great.

The flour of fairnes lappeth in his armès,
And Venus kisseth Mars, the god of armès.

Sojourned hath this Mars of which I rede
In chambre amynd the paleys, prively,
A certeyn tymè, til him fel adrede, 80
Through Phebus, that was comen hastely
Within the paleys gatès, sturdely,
With torche in honde, of which the
stremès bryghte
On Venus chambre knockeden ful lighte.

The chambre ther as lay this fresshe
quene
Depeynted was with whitè bolès grete,
And by the light she knew, that shoon
so shene,
That Phebus cam to brenne hem with his
hete ;
This sely Venus, nygh dreynt in terès wete,
Enbraceth Mars, and seyde, 'Alas, I dye !
The torch is come that al this world wol
wrie.' 91

Up stertè Mars, hym listè not to slepe,
When he his lady herdè so compleyne,
But for his nature was not for to wepe,
Insteede of terès, from his eyen tweyne
The fry sparkès brosten out for peyne ;
And hente his hauberk, that lay hym besyde.
Flee wolde he not, ne myghte him-selven
hyde.

He throweth on his helm of hugè wyghte,
And girt him with his swerde ; and in
his honde 100
His myghty spere, as he was wont to fighte
He shaketh so that almost hit to-wonde.
Ful hevy was he to walken over londe,
He may not holde with Venus companye,
But bad her fleen, lest Phebus hir espye.

O woful Mars ! alas ! what mayst thou
seyn,
That in the paleys of thy disturbance
Art left behynde in peril to be sleyn ?
And yet ther-to is double thy penaunce,
For she that hath thyn herte in govern-
aunce 110

86. *white boles*, the sign of Taurus, in which
both Mars and Venus now are.

Is passèd halfe the stremès of thyn yèn ;
That thou nere swift wel mayst thou wepe
and crien.

Now fleeth Venus un-to Cylenius tour,
With voidè cours, for fere of Phebus light,
Alas ! and ther ne hath she no socour,
For she ne fond ne saugh no maner wyght ;
And eek as ther she had but litil myght ;
Wher-for her-selven for to hyde and save,
Within the gate she fledde in-to a cave.

Derk was this cave, and smokyng as
the helle, 120
Not but two pas within the gate hit stood ;
A naturel day in derk I lete her dwelle.
Now wol I speke of Mars, furious and wood.
For sorwe he wolde have seen his hertè
blood ;
Sith that he myghte don her no companye,
He ne roghtè not a mytè for to dye.

So feble he wex for hete and for his wo
That nygh he swelt, he myghte unnethe
endure,
He passeth but oo steyre in dayès two,
But nathèles for al his hevy armure,
He foloweth hir that is his lyvès cure ; 131
For whos departyng he toke gretter ire
Thannè for al his brennyng in the fire.

After he walketh softely a pas,
Compleynnyng, that it pite was to here ;
He seyde, 'O lady bryght, Venus ! alas !
That ever so wyde a compas ys my spere !
Alas ! when shal I mete yow, hertè dere ?
This twelftè day of April I endure,
Through jelous Phebus, this mysaventure.'

Now God helpèsely Venus, ala-lone ! 141
But, as God wolde, hit happèd for to be
That while that Venus weping made her
mone

112. *Cylenius*. Mercury, born on Mt. Cyllene in Arcadia. The Tower of Cyllenium, i.e. mansion of Mercury, is the sign Gemini into which Venus now passes.

119. *cave*, according to Skeat a translation of the technical Latin astrological term *puteus*. The *putei* in Gemini are the degrees numbered 2, 12, 17, 26, 30. So Venus was now in the second degree of the sign.

139. On 12th April the sun entered Taurus.

Cylenius, ridyng in his chevauche
Fro Venus valance, myghte his paleys se,
And Venus he salueth, and maketh chere,
And her receyvethe as his frend ful dere.

Mars dwelleth forth in his adversité,
Compleynyng ever in on hir departyng,
And what his compleynt was, remem-
breth me, 150
And therfor in this lusty morwenyng,
As I best can, I wol it seyn and syng,
And after that I wol my levè take;
And God yeve every wyght joye of his
make!

THE COMPLEYNTE OF MARS

The Proem

The ordre of compleynt requireth skil-
fully,
That if a wyght shal pleynè pitously
Ther mot becausè wherfor that men pleyne;
Or men may deme he pleyneth folily,
And causèles; alas, that am not I!
Wherfor the ground and cause of al my
payne, 160
So as my troublèd wit may hit ateyne,
I wol reherse; not for to have redresse,
But to declare my ground of hevynesse.

I

The firstètyme, alas! that I was wrought,
And for certeyn effectès hider brought,
By him that lordeth ech intelligence,
I yaf my trewè servise and my thoght,
For ever-more,—how dere I have it
boght!—
To hir, that is of so gret excellence
That what wyght that fust sheweth his
presence 170
When she is wroth and taketh of hym no
cure,
He may not longe in joye of love endure.

145. *valance*, according to Skeat, is either the Fr. *fallance*, *faillance*, failure, and an exact translation of the Latin astrological term *detrimētum*, or it is *avalance*, a translation of the Latin *occasus*, an alternative expression for the same thing. The *detrimētum* is the sign of the Zodiac opposite the planet's mansion, and is here equivalent to Aries.

This is no feynèd mater that I telle;
My lady is the verrey sours and welle
Of beaute, lust, fredom, and gentillesse,
Of riche aray,—how derè men it selle!—
Of al disport in which men frendly dwelle,
Of love and pley, and of benigne humblesse,
Of soun of instruments of al swetnesse,
And therto so wel fortunèd and thewèd
That through the world hir goodnesse is
y-shewed. 181

What wonder is then, thogh that I besette
Myservise on suche oon that may me knette
To wele or wo, sith hit lyth in her myght?
Therfor my herte for ever I to her hette,
Ne trewly for my dethe I shal not lette
To ben her trewest servaunt, and her
knyght.

I flater noght, that may wite every wyght,
For this day in hir servise shal I dye;
But gracè be, I se hir never with ðe. 190

II

To whom shal I then pleyne of my
distresse?
Who may me helpe? Who may my harm
redresse?

Shal I compleyne unto my lady fre?
Nay, certes! for she hath such hevynesse
For fere, and eek for wo, that, as I gesse,
In litil tyme it wol her banè be.
But were she sauf, it were no fors of me!
Alas! that ever lovers mote endure,
For love, so many a perilous aventure!

For thogh so be that lovers be as trewe
As any metal that is forgèd newe, 20
In many a cas hem tydeth ofè sorwe.
Somtyme hir ladies will not on hem rewe;
Somtyme if that Ielousie hit knewe,
They myghten lightly leye hir heed to
borwe;

Somtyme envyous folke with tungès horwe
Depraven hem; alas! Whom may they
plese?

But he be fals, no lover hath his ese!

But what availèth suche a long sermoun
Of aventures of lovè up and down? 210

I wol returne and speken of my peyne ;
 The poynt is this of my destruccioun,—
 My righte lady, my salvacyoun,
 Is in affray, and not to whom to pleyne.
 O hertè swete ! O lady sovereyne !
 For your disese wel oghte I swoune and
 swelte,
 Thogh I non other harm ne dredè felte.

III

To what fyn made the God that sit so hyc,
 Be-nethen him love other companye,
 And streyneth folk to love malgré hir hede,
 And then hir joye, for oght I canespye, 221
 Ne lasteth not the twynkelyng of an yē ;
 And somme han never joye til they be dede.
 What meneth this? what is this mystihede?
 Wherto constreyneth he his folk so faste
 Thyng to desyrè, but it sholdè laste ?

And thogh he made a lover love a thyng,
 And maketh it semè stedfast and duryng,
 Yet putteth he in it such mysaventure
 That restè nis ther noon in his yevyng ; 230
 And that is wonder that so just a kyng
 Doth such hardnessè to his creature.
 Thus, whether lovè breke, or ellès dure,
 Algatès he that hath with love to done
 Hath ofter wo then changèd is the mone.

Hit semeth he hath to lovers enmyte,
 And lyk a fissher, as men alday may se,
 Baiteth his angle-hook with som plesaunce,
 Til mon ya fish is wood, til that he be 239
 Sesèd ther-with ; and then at erst hath he
 Al his desire, and ther-withal myschaunce ;
 And thogh the lynè breke, he hath penaunce,
 For with the hook he wounded is so sore
 That he his wages hath for ever-more.

IV

The broche of Thebès was of such a
 kynde ;

245. *The broche of Thebes* or magic bracelet (cp. *Thebais* of Statius, Bk. ii.) was made by Vulcan for Harmonia, a daughter of Mars and Venus, in order to bring an evil fate on her and all later possessors of it.

So ful of rubies, and of stonès Inde,
 That every wyght that sette on hit an yē,
 He wende anon to worthe out of his
 mynde,—

So sore the beautè wold his hertè bynde,—
 Til he hit hadde him thoghte he mostè dye,
 And whan that hit was his, then sholde
 he drye 251
 Such wo for drede, ay while that he hit
 hadde,
 That welnygh for the fere he sholdè madde.

And whan hit was fro his possessioun
 Then hadde he double wo and passioun,
 For he so fair a tresor had forgo ;
 But yet this broche, as in conclusioun,
 Was not the cause of this confusioun ;
 But he that wroghte hit enfortuned hit so
 That every wyght that hadde hit sholde
 have wo ; 260
 And therfor in the worcher was the vyce,
 And in the covetour that was so nyce.

So fareth hit by lovers and by me ;
 For thogh my lady have so gret beautè
 That I was mad til I had gete hir grace,
 She was not cause of myn adversitè,
 But he that wroghte hir, also mot I thee,
 That puttè such a beaute in hir face,
 That madè me coveten and purchase 269
 Myn ownè deth ; him wyte I that I dye,
 And myn unwit that ever I clomb so hye.

V

But to yow, hardy knyghtès of renoun,
 Syn that ye be of my divisioun,—
 Al be I not worth to so grete a name,
 Yet seyn these clerckès I am your patroun,—
 Ther-for ye oghte have som compassioun
 Of my disese, and take hit noght a-game,
 The proudest of yow may be mad ful tame.
 Wherfor I prey yow of your gentillesse,
 That ye compleynè for myn hevynesse. 280

And ye, my ladies, that ben trewe and
 stable,
 By way of kynde, ye oghten to been able
 To have pitè of folk that been in peyne ;

246. *Inde* is an adjective ; cp. *Romaunt of the Rose*, l. 67.

Now have ye cause to clothé yow in sable ;
 Sith that your empericé, the honorable,
 Is desolat, wel oghte ye to pleyne ;
 Nowsholde your holy terés falle and reyne.
 Alas ! your honour and your emperice,
 Nigh deed for drede, necan hir not chevisé !

Compleyneth eek, ye lovers, al in-fere,
 For hir that with unfeynéd humblé chere
 Was ever redy to do yow socour ; 292
 Compleyneth hir that ever hath had yow
 dere ;

Compleyneth beaute, fredom, and manere ;
 Compleyneth hir that endeth your labour ;
 Compleyneth thilke ensample of al honour,
 That never didé but al gentillesse ;
 Kytheth therfor on hir som kyndcnesse !

A COMPLEYNTE TO HIS LADY

I

THE longé nightes, whan every creature
 Shulde have hir rest in somwhat, as by
 kynde,

Or elles ne may hir lif nat long endure,
 Hit falleth most into my woful mynde
 How I so fer have broght myself behynde,
 That, sauf the deeth, ther may no-thing
 me lisse,
 So desespairod I am from allé blisse.

This samé thought me lasteth til the morwe
 And from the morwé forth til hit be eve ;
 Ther nedeth me no caré for to borwe, 10
 For bothe I have good leyser and good leve ;
 Ther is no wyght that wol me wo bereve
 To wepe y-nogh, and wailen al my fille ;
 The soré spark of peyne now doth me spille.

II

This Love, that hath me set in swich
 a place
 That my desir wol never he fulfille,
 For neither pitee, mercy, neither grace,

2, 3. Shirley, *theyre* for *hir*.

15-43. This passage is in *terza rima*, the first example of the measure in English literature.

16. Shirley omits *he*.

Can I nat fynde ; and yit my sorful
 herte,
 For to be deed, I can hit nought arace ;
 The more I love, the more she doth me
 smerte. 20
 Through which I see, withouté remedye
 That from the deeth I may no wyse
 asterte ;

III

Nowsothly, what she hight I wol reherse.
 Hir name is Bountee, set in womanhede,
 Sadnesse in youthe and Beautee
 pryddées

And Plesaunce, under governaunce
 and drede ;

Hir surname is eek Fairé Rewthélees,
 The Wyse, y-knit un-to Good Aventure,
 That, for I love hir, she sleeth me
 giltélees. 30

Hir love I best, and shal, whyl I may dure,
 Bet than my-self an hundred thousand
 deel,

Than al this worldes richesse or créature.
 Now hath not Lové me bestowéd weel
 To lové ther I never shal have part ?
 Allas ! right thus is turned me the wheel,
 Thus am I slayn with Lovés fry dart.

I can but love hir best, my sweté fo ;
 Love hath me taught no more of his art
 But serve alwey, and stinté for no wo. 40

IV

In my trewe and careful herte ther is
 So moché wo, and [eek] so litel blis
 That wo is me that ever I was bore ;

23. It is possible that another line to rime with l. 22 is missing here.

24. Skeat thinks two lines have fallen out before this, forming the opening to this section, but it is more probable that l. 24, which is not necessary to the sense, has been inserted. Shirley or his authority has tried to reduce this passage of *terza rima* to a series of eight-line stanzas. He divides at l. 23, l. 32, and l. 41 ; the last stanza, being hard to amend, had to remain with nine lines.

39. This line seems to be a syllable short.

41. So Shirley, who first wrote *In my trewe hert*, etc., and then corrected *hert* into *and*. The line is probably corrupt. Ed. 156r omits *and*.

42. Shirley omits *eek*, which Skeat supplies.

For al that thyng which I desyre I mys,
 And al that ever I woldé not, y-wys,
 That finde I redy to me evermore ;
 And of al this I not to whom me pleyne.
 Forshethat mighté me out of this brynge
 Ne reccheth nought whether I wepe
 or synge ; 49
 So litel rewthe hath she upon my peyne.

Allas ! whan slepyng-tyme is, than I wake,
 Whan I shulde daunce, for feré than I
 quake ;

This hevy lif I ledé for your sake
 Thogh ye ther-of in no wyse hedé take,
 My hertés lady, and hool my lyvés quene !
 For trewly dorste I seye, as that I fele,
 Me semeth that your sweté herte of stele
 Is whettéd now ageynés me to kene.

My deré herte and best beloved fo,
 Why liketh yow to do me al this wo, 60
 What have I doon that greveth yow, or
 sayd,

But for I serve and love yow and no mo ?
 And whilst I lyve I wol ever do so ;
 And therfor, swete, ne beth nat yvel
 apayd.

For so good and so fair as ye be
 I lit weré right gret wonder but ye hadde
 Of allé servantes, bothe of goode and
 badde ;
 And leest worthy of alle hem, I am he.

But never-the-les, my righté lady swete,
 Thogh that I be unconnyng and unmete
 To serve, as I coude best, ay your
 hynesse. 71
 Yit is ther fayner noon, that wolde I hete,
 Than I, to do yow ese, or ellés beté
 What so I wiste that were to your
 [distresse] ;

44-46. Cp. *Parl. Foules*, ll. 90, 91, and *Compl. of Pite*, ll. 99-104.

47. Cp. *Anelida*, l. 237.

51. Shirley inserts *to before than*.

51. This stanza is different in form from those that precede and follow it.

53. Shirley inserts *to* after *ledé*.

65. *fair* seems here to be dissyllabic as in A.S.

72. Shirley, *noon fayner*.

74. Shirley, *to yourre hyenesse*, caught from l. 71. Skeat reads *to yow distresse*. Perhaps that was

And hadde I myght as good as I have wille
 Than shulde ye fele wher it were so
 or noon ;

For in this worldé lyvyng is ther noon
 That fayner wolde your hertés wil fulfille.

For bothe I love and eek drede yow so sore,
 And algates moot, and have doon yow,
 ful yore, 80

That bettré loved is noon, ne never shal ;
 And yit I wolde beseche yow of no more,
 But leveth wel, and be not wrooth ther-fore,
 And lat me serve yow forth ; lo, this is al !
 For I am not so hardy, ne so wood,
 For to desire that ye shulde lové me ;
 For wel I wot, alas ! that may nat be ;
 I am so litel worthy, and ye so good.

For ye be oon the worthiest on-lyve
 And I the most unlikely for to thryve ; 90
 Yit for al this witeth ye right wile
 That ye ne shul me from your servyce dryve
 That I nil ay, with alle my wyttés fyve,
 Serve yow trewly, what woso that I fele.
 For I am set on yow in swich manere,
 That, thogh ye never wil upon me rewe,
 I moste yow love, and beén everas trewe
 As any man can, or may, on-lyvé [here].

But the moré that I love yow, goodly free,
 The lassé fynde I that ye loven me ; 100

Allas ! whan shal that hardé wyt amendei
 Wher is now al your wommanly pitee,
 Your gentillesse and your debonairstee
 Wilyeno-thing ther-of upon mespendei
 And so hool, swete, as I am yourés al,
 And so gret wil as I have yow to serve,
 Now, certes, and ye leté me thus sterve,
 Yit have ye wonné ther-on but a smal.

For at my knowyng, I do nought why,
 And this I wol beseche yow hertély, 110

not in the original text and *wiste* was pronounced as a dissyllable.

91. Skeat inserts *now* before *witeth*, but the whole poem is experimental, and possibly this line is as Chaucer wrote it. Cp. ll. 39, 109, and 116. In all a heavy stress on the first syllable lends dramatic value to the line.

93. Shirley, *ne wil*.

98. *here* supplied by Skeat.

99. Shirley, *But the more*, etc. Skeat omits *But*.

That, ther ever ye fyndè, whil ye lyve,
 A trewer servant to yow than am I,
 Leveth thanne, and sleeth me hardcly
 And I my deeth to yow wol al foryive.
 And if ye fynde no trewer verely
 Will ye suffrè than that I thus spille,
 And forno maner gilt but mygood wille?
 Asgood wer thanne untrewc as trewe to be.

But I, my lyf and deeth, to yow obeye,
 And with right buxom herte hooly I preye
 As is your mostè plesure, so doth by me;
 Wel lever is me liken yow and dye ¹²²
 Than for to anythyng or thynke or seye
 That myghtè yow offende in any tyme.
 And ther-for, swete, rewe on my peynès
 smerte
 And of your gracè granteth me som
 drope;
 For ellès may me laste ne blis, ne hope,
 Ne dwellen in my troublè careful herte.

THE COMPLEYNTE OF FAIRE ANELIDA AND FALSE ARCITE

THOU fersè God of armès, Mars the rede,
 That in the frosty contree callèd Trace,
 Within thy grisly temple ful of drede,
 Honoured art, as patrour of that place!
 With thy Bellona, Pallas, ful of grace!
 Be present, and mysong contynueand gye.
 At my begynnyng thus to the I crye.

For hit ful depe is sonken in my mynde,
 With pitous herte, in Englysh for tendyte
 This oldè storie, in Latyn which I fynde, to
 Of quene Anelyda and fals Arcite,
 That eldè, which that al can frete and
 bite,—

111. Shirley, *whyles*.

115. Shirley, *no trewer so verrayly*. Ed. 1561
no trewer verely, a false rime.

119-128. This stanza is only found in the Philipps
 MS., and I take the text from Skeat. I am doubt-
 ful of its authenticity.

1-70. These first ten stanzas are based on the
Tesside, i. and ii.

1. *Mars the rede*, 'O Marte rubicondo,' *Tes*.

i. 3.

2. *Trace*, *Thrace*.

As hit hath fretèn mony a noble storie,—
 Hath nygh devourèd out of our memòrie.

Be favorable eek, thou Polýmnyá,
 On Párnaso that with thy sustrès glade,
 By Elicon, not fer from Cirreá,
 Syngest with vois memorial in the shade,
 Under the laurer, which that may not fade,
 And do that I my shippe to haven wyne.
 First folwe I Stace, and after him Corynne.

[The Story]

When Thesèus, with werrès longe and
 grete, ²²
 The asprè folk of Cithe hadde overcome,
 With laurer crounèd, in his char, gold bete,
 Home to his contrè houses is y-come;
 For which the peple, blisful al and somme,
 So crydèn, that un-to the sterres hit wente,
 And him to honouren dide al hir entente.

Beforen this duke, in signe of hy victòrie,
 The trompès come, and in his baner large,
 The ymáge of Mars; and in tokenýng of
 glòrie, ³¹
 Men myghtè seen of tresor mony a charge,
 Mony a bright helm, and mony a spere
 and targe,
 Mony a fresh knyght, and mony a blis-
 ful route,
 On hors, and fote, in al the felde aboute.

Ipolita, his wyf, the hardy quene
 Of Cithia, that he conquérèd hadde,
 With Emelye her yongè suster shene,

15. *Polýmnyia*, Πολυμνία, one of the nine
 Muses.

16. *Parnaso*, Mount Parnassus.

17. *Elicon*, Mount Helicon in Bœotia, but
 Chaucer seems to have confused it with the
 Castalian spring. Cp. *H. of F.* l. 522, and
Troil. iii. 1209.

17. *Cirreá*, Cirra, an ancient town near Delphi
 at the foot of Parnassus.

21. *Stace*, Statius, whose *Thebaid* is the source
 of some of the following stanzas.

21. *Corynne*, Corinnus, who is said to have
 written an account of the Trojan war in Doric
 Greek.

23. *Cithe*, Scythia.

24. Cp. *Kn. T.* 169, 121.

30, 31. Cp. *Ibid.* 117, 118.

36, 37. Cp. *Ibid.* 23, 24.

38. Cp. *Ibid.* 114.

Faire in a char of golde he with hym ladde,
That al the ground aboute her char she
spradde

With brightnesse of the beautee in her face,
Fulfilled of largesse and of al grace.

With his tryumph, and laurer-crounéd
thus,

In al the floure of fortunés yevynge,
Lete I this noble prince, this Thescüs,
Toward Athénés in his wey ridynge,
And founde I wol in shortly for to brynge
The slyc wey of that I gan to write,
Of quene Anélida and fals Arcite.

Mars, which that through his furious
course of yre,

The oldé wrath of Juno to fulfille,
Hath set the peplés hertés bothe on fire
Of Thebes and Grece, eché other for to kille
With bloody speres, ne restéd, never stille,
But thronow now her, now ther, among hem
bothe,
That everych other slough, so were they
wrothe.

For when Amphiorax and Tydeus,
Ipomedon, Parthonopee also
Were dede, and slawen proud Campancus,
And when the wrecchéd Thebans bretheren
two

Were slayn, and kyng Adrastus home a-go,
So desolat stood Thebés and so bare,
That no wyght coude remédie of his fare.

And when that oldé Creon gan espye
How that the blood roial was broght adoun,
He held the cite by his tyrannye,
And dide the gentils of that regioun
To ben his frendes, and wonnén in the town.

50-70. Cp. *Teseide*, ii. st. 10-12.

57. *Amphiorax*, Amphiarau, swallowed up by the earth at the siege of Thebes.

57. *Tydeus*, married a daughter of Adrastus.

58. *Ipomedon*, Hippomedon, one of the 'Septem contra Thebas,' as also was *Parthonopee* (*Parthenopeus*), and *Campancus* (*Capaneus*) who was struck with lightning by Jupiter.

59. *Cx. slayn and proud*; rest *slayn proud*.

60. *i.e.* Eteocles and Polynices, who caused the war.

61. *Adrastus*, King of Argos, who assisted his son-in-law Polynices.

So, what for love of him, and what for awe,
The noble folk wer to the toun y-drawe.

Among al these, Anélida the quene
Of Ermony was in that toun duellynge,
That fairer was then is the sonnéd shene;
Throughout the world so gan her namé
sprynge,

That her to seen had every wyght likynge;
For, as of trouthe, ther is noon her liche,
Of al the women in this worldé riche.

Yong was this quene, of twenty yeer
of elde,

Of mydel stature, and of swich fairnesse,
That Nature had a joye hir to behelde;
And for to spoken of her stidfastnesse,
She passed hath Penelope and Lucesse,
And shortly, yf she shal be comprehended,
In her ne myghté nothing been amended.

This Theban knyght [Arcite] eek, soth
to seyn,

Wasyonge, and ther-withal a lusty knyght,
But he was double in love, and nothyng
pleyn,

And subtil in that crafte over any wyght,
And with his cunnyng wan this lady bright:
For so ferforth he can hir trouthe assure,
That she him trust over any creature.

What shulde I seyn? She lovede
Arcité so

That when that he was absent any throwe,
Anon hir thoghte hir herté brast a-two?
For in hir sight to hir he bar him lowe,
So that she wende have al his herte y-knowe;
But he was fals, hit nas but feynéd chere,—
As nedeth not to men such craft to lere!

But nathéles ful mychel besynesse

Haddé he, er that he myghte his lady wyinne,
And swor he woldé dyén for distresse,
Or from his wyt, he seyde, he woldé twynne.

72. *Ermony*, Armenia.

76. So *l.t.*; the rest is *ther*; perhaps Chaucer wrote *nis ther*.

82. *Lucesse*, Lucretia.

85. Skeat inserts *Arcité*.

91. Skeat reads *trust*; B *l.t.* F H D Cx. *trusted*; Ha. Tn. *trusteth*.

Alas the while! for hit was routhe and synne,
That she upon his sorwés woldé rewe,
But nothyng thenketh the fals as doth the trewe.

Hir fredom fond Arcite in swich manere,
That al was his that she hath, moche or lyte;
Ne to no créature ne made she chere,
Ferther than that it lykédé to Arcite;
Ther was no lak with which he myghte
hir wyte, 170
She was so ferforth yeven him to plese,
That al that lykédé him it dide hir esc.

Ther nas to hir no maner lettre y-sent
That touchéd love, from eny maner wyght,
That she ne shewed hit him er hit was
brent;
So pleyn she was, and dide hir fullé myght,
That she nyl hiden nothyng from her
knyght,
Lest he of any untrouth hir upbreyde;
Withouté bode his hesté she obeyde. 179

And eek he made him jelous over here,
That what that eny man hadde to hir seyd,
Anoon he woldé preyén hir to swere
What was that word, or make him evel
apaid;
Then wendé she out of her wyt have brayd,
But al this nas but sleight and flaterie;
Withoutén love, he feynéd jelousye.

And al this took she so debonairly,
That al his wyllé, hir thoughte hit skilful
thyng;
And ever the lenger she loved him tenderly,
And dide him honour as he were a kyng. 130
Hir herte was to him wedded with a ring;
So ferforth upon trouthe is hir entente,
That wher he goth, hir herté with him wente.

When she shal etc, on him is so hir
thought,
That wel unnethé of meté took she kepe;
And whan that she was to her resté broght,
On him she thoughte alwey til that she sleep;
When he was absent, prevély she weep.
Thus lyveth fair Anelida the quene, 139
For fals Arcite, that dide her al this tene.

This fals Arcite, of his newfangelnesse,
For she to him so lowly was and trewe,
Took lessé deyntee for her stedfastnesse,
And saw another lady, proud and newe,
And right anon he cladde him in hir
hewe,—
Wot I not whether in whité, rede, or
grene,—
And falséd fair Anelida the quene.

But nathélesse, gret wonder was hit noon
Thogh he were fals, for hit is kynde of man,
Sith Lamek was, that is so longe agoon, 150
To been in love as fals as ever he can;
He was the firsté fader that began
To lovén two, and was in bigamy.
And he found tentés first, but if men lye.

This fals Arcité somewhat moste he feyne
When he was fals, to covere his traitorye,
Right as an hors, that can both bite and
pleyne;
For he bar hir on honde of trecherye,
And swoor he coude her doublenesse espye,
And al was falsnes that she to him mente;
Thus swoor this theef, and forth his way
he wente. 161

Alas! what herté myghte enduren hit,
For routhe or wo, hir sorwé for to telle?
Or what man hath the cunnynge or the wyt?
Or what man myghte within the chambre
duelle,
If I to him rehersén shal the helle
That suffreth fair Anelida the quene
For fals Arcite, that dide her al this tene?

She wepeth, waileth, swouneth pitously,
To groundé deed she falleth as a stoon;
Al crampisseth hir lymés crokedy; 171
She speketh as hir wyt were al agoon;
Other colour then ashen hath she noon,
Non other word she speketh moche or lyte,
But 'Mercy! cruel herté myn, Arcite!'

And thus endureth, til she was so
mate

146. But not blue, the colour of constancy.
174. All read *speketh she*.

That she ne hath foot, on which she may
sustene,
But forth, languisshing evere in this estate,
Of which Arcite hath nother routhe ne
tene;
His herte is elléswier so newe and grene,
That on hir wo ne deyneth him not to
thinke, 181
Him rekketh never wher she flete or synke.

His newé lady holdeth him so narwé
Up by the brydel, at the stavés ende,
That every word he dradde hit as an arwé;
Hir daunger made him bothé bowe and
bende,
And as hir listé, made him turne or wende;
For she ne graunted him in her lyvyng
No gracé, why that he hath lust to synge;

But drof him forth, unnethé liste hir
knowe 190
That he was servaunt to her ladishippe;
But lest that he wer proude, she helde
him lowe.
Thus serveth he, withoutén fee or shipe
She sent him now to londé, now to shippe,
And for she yaf him daunger al his fille,
Therfor she hadde him at her owné wille.

Ensampler of this, ye thrifty wymmen,
alle,
Take here of Anelida and fals Arcite,
That for hir liste him 'deré herté' calle,
And was so meke, therfor he loved hir lyte;
The kynde of mannés herte is to delyte 201
In thyng that straunge is, also God me
save!
For what he may not gete, that wolde he
have

Now turne we to Anelida ageyn,
That pyneth day be day in languisshyng:
But when she saw that hir ne gat no geyn,
Upon a day, ful sorrowfully wepyng,
She caste hir for to make a compleynyng;
And with her owné hond she gan hit wryte,
And sente it to her Theban knyght Arcite.

[*The compleynt of Faire Anelyda upon
Fals Arcyte*]

(*Proem*)

So thirleth with the poynt of remem-
brance, 211
The swerd of sorwe, y-whet with fals
plesaunce,
Myn herté bare of blis, and blak of hewe,
That turned is to quakyng al my daunce,
My sureté in a-whaped countenaunce,
Sith hit availeth not for to ben trewe:
For who-so trewest is, hit shall hir rewe
That serveth love, and doth hir observaunce
Alwey to oon, and chaungeth for no
newe.

(*Strophe*)

I wot my-self as wel as any wyght, 220
For I loved oon with al my herte and myght,
More then my-self an hundred thousand
sithe,
And calléde him my hertés lyf, my knyght,
And was al his, as fer as hit was right;
And whan that he was glad, than was
I blithe,
And his disesé was my deeth as swythe,
And he ageyn his trouthe me haddé plight,
For ever-more, his lady me to kythe.

Now is he fals, alas! and causéles,
And of my wo he is so routhéles, 230
That with a worde him list not onés deyne
To bringe ageyn my sorwful herte in pees,
For he is caught up in another lees;
Right as him list, he laugheth at my
peyne,
And I ne can myn herté not restreyné
That I ne love him alwey nathéles,
And of al this I noot to whom me pleyne.

And shal I pleyne (alas! the hardé
stounde) 238
Unto my foo, that yaf my herte a wounde,
And yet desireth that myn harm be more?
Nay, certés! ferther wol I never founde
Non other help my sorés for to sounde;
My desteny hath shapen hit ful yore,
I wil non other medecyne ne lore,

183. A metaphor borrowed from a horse lightly
harnessed to the pole of a cart.

191. All read *unto*.

229. F B H *Allas now hath he left me
causeles.*

I wil ben ay ther I was onés bounde ;
That I have seid, be seid for evermore.

Alas ! wher is become your gentillesse ?
Your wordés ful of plesaunce and hum-
blesse ?

Your observaunces in soo low manere ?
And your awayting, and your besynesse, 250
Upon me, that ye callèd your maistresse,
Your sovereyn lady in this world here ?
Alas ! and is ther now nother word ne
chere,

Ye vouchesauf upon myn hevynesse ?
Alas ! your love, I bye hit al to dere !

Now certès, sweté, thogh that ye
Thus causèdes the cause be,
Of my dedly adversité,
Your manly resoun oghte it to respyte,
To slee your frend, and namely me, 260
That never yet in no degré
Offended yow, as wisly he,
That al wot, out of wo my soulé quyte.

But for I was so pleyne, Arcite,
In alle my werkès, muche and lite,
And so besy yow to delyte,—
Myn honour save,—mekc, kynde, and fre,
Therfor ye putte on me this wyte :
And of me recchè not a myte,
Thogh that the swerde of sorwè byte 270
My woful herté, through your cruelté.

My sweté foo, why do ye so, for shame ?
And thenké ye that furtherèd be your
name,

Tolovea-newe, and ben untrewé ? Nay !
And putté you in sclaunder now and blame,
And do to me adversitee and grame,
That love you most—God, wel thou
wost !—away ?

And come ageyn, and be al pleyn som
day,
And then shal this, that hath be mys,
be game,
And al foryivé, whyl I lyvé may. 280

264-266. F B Tn. H D Lt. Ff.—

But for I shewed you, Arcite,
All that men wold to me wryte,
And was so besy, etc.

279. F B H And turne al this . . . to.

(*Antistrophe*)

Lo, herté myn, al this is for to seyn,
As whether shal I preye or ellès pleyn ?
Which is the way to doon yow to be
trewé ?

For either mot I have yow in my cheyn,
Or with the dethe ye mot departeustweyn ;
Ther ben non other mené weyès newe,
For, God so wisly upon my soulé rewe,
As verily ye sleen me with the peyn ;
That may ye see unfeynèd of myn hewe.

For thus ferforth have I my deeth y-soght,
My-self I mordre with my prevy thoght ; 291
For sorwe and routhe of your unkynd-
nesse,
I wepe, I wake, I faste ; al helpeth noght ;
I weyvè joy that is to speke of oght,
I voydè companye, I flee gladnesse ;
Who may avaunte hir bet of hevynesse
Then I ? And to this plyte have ye me
brought,
Withouté gilt,—me nedeth no witnesse.

And sholde I preye, and weyvè woman-
hede ? 299
Nay ! rather deeth, then do so cruel dede,
And axè mercy, causèdes,—what nede ?
And if I pleyne what lyf that I lede,
Than wol ye laugh ; I know it out of drede ;
And if I unto you myn othès bede
Formyn excuse, ascorn shal be my mede,
Your cherè floureth, but it wol not sede,
Ful longcagoon I oghte have takè hede.

Forthogh I haddè yow to-morweageyn,
I myghte as wel holde Avèrill fro reyn,
As holdè yow to makè yow stedfast. 310
Almyghty God, of trouthe the sovereyn !
Wher is the trouthe of man ? who hath it
sleyn ?

Who that hem lovèth, shal hem fynde
as fast
As in a tempest is a roten mast.
Is that a tamè best, that is ay feyn
To renne away, when he is leest agast ?

290. Harl. Cx. omit this stanza. All read
soght.

303. F B Tn. Lt. Ff. H *You reeketh not that ;*
D *You rekke not that.*

Now mercy, swete, if I mysseye !
 Have I seyð oght amys, I preye ?
 I noot, my wit is al awaye.
 I fare as doth the songe of *Chauntepleure* ;
 For now I pleyne, and now I pleye, 321
 I am so maséd that I deye,
 Arcite hath born awaye the keye
 Of al my worlde, and my good aventure.

For in this worlde nys créature,
 Walkynge, in more discomfiture,
 Then I, ne moré sorwe endure ;
 And if I slepe a furlong wey or tweye,
 Than thinketh me, that your figure
 Before me stant clad in assure, 330
 To profren eft a newe assure,
 For to be trewe, and mercy me to preye.

The longé nyght, this wonder sight I
 drye,
 And on the day for this afray I dye,
 And of al this right noght, ywys, yerecche ;
 Ne nevermo myn yfen two be drye,
 And to your routhe and to your trouthe
 I crie !
 But, welaway ! to fer be they to fecche,
 Thus holdeth me my destynece a wrecche,
 But me to rede out of this drede, or gye,
 Ne may my wit, so weyke is hit, not
 strecche. 341

(Conclusion)

Thenende I thus, sith I may do no more,—
 I yeve hit up for now and evermore ;
 For I shal never eft puttén in balaunce
 My sekernes, ne lerne of love the lore ;
 But as the swan, I have herd seye ful yore,
 Ayeys his deeth shal singén his penaunce,
 So singe I here the destynny or chaunce,
 How that Arcite, Anelida so sore
 Had thirléd with the poynt of remem-
 braunce. 350

[The Story continued]

Whan that Anelida, this woful quene,
 Hath of her handé writen in this wyse,

320. *Chauntepleure*, the name of a famous poem of the 13th century addressed to those who sing in this world but shall weep in the next.

331. F B H *To swere yet*.

351. This stanza is found only in Tn. D Fl. and Lt.

With facé deed, betwuxé pale and grene,
 She fel a-swowe ; and sith she gan to rise,
 And unto Mars avoweth sacrificise
 Within the temple, with a sorwful chere,
 That shapen was, as ye shal after here.

THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

Here begynnyth the Parlement of Foulys

The Proem

THE lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne,
 Thassay so hard, so sharp the conquerynge,
 The dredful joye, alwey that slit so yerne ;
 Al this mene I be love, that my felyng
 A-stonyeth with his wondrous ful werkynge,
 So sore y-wis, that whan I on hym thyнке
 Nat wot I wel wher that I flete or synke.

Foral be that I knowe not Love in dede,
 Ne wot how that he quyeth folk hir hyre,
 Yit happeth me ful ofte in bokés rede 10
 Of his myracles and his cruel yre ;
 Ther rede I wel he wol be lord and syre,
 I dar nat seyn, his strokés been so sore,
 But God save swich a lord ! I sey no more.

Of usage, whatfor lust and whatfor lore,
 On bokés rede I ofte, as I yow tolde.
 But wherfor that I speke al this ? Not yore
 Agon, it happed me for to be-holde 18
 Up-on a bok, was write with lettrés olde ;
 And ther-upon, a certeyn thing to lerne,
 The longé day ful faste I radde and yerne.

For out of oldé feldés, as men seith,
 Cometh al this newé corn from yeer to
 yere ;
 And out of oldé hokes, in good feith,
 Cometh al this newé science that men lere.
 But now to purpos as of this matere,—
 To redé forth it gan me so delyte,
 That al the day me thoughté but a lyte.

This bok, of which I maké mencion, 30
 Entitled was al thus as I schal telle,

357. Lt. Th. *may plainly*.

1. Hippocrates' first aphorism:—

ὁ βίος βραχύς, ἡ δὲ τέχνη μακρή.

'Tullyus, of the Dreem of Scipioun.'
Chapitrès it hadde sevene, of hevenē and
helle

And erthe, and soulès that therynnédwelle,
Of whiche, as shortly as I can it trete,
Of his sentence I wol you seyn the grete.

First, telleth it, whan Scipioun was come
In Affrik, how he mettē Massynisse
That him for joye in armēs hath y-nome.
Than telleth he hir speche, and al the
blisse

That was betwix hem til the day gan misse, 39
And how his auncestre, African so dere,
Gan in his slep that nyght to him appere.

Than telleth it, that from a sterry place,
How African hath him Cartagē shewēd,
And warnēd him be-fore of al his grace,
And seyde him, what man lerēd other lewēd
That loveth comun profit, wel y-thewēd,
He shulde in-to a blisful placē wende,
Ther as joye is that last with-uten ende.

Than axēde he if folk that heer been
dede 50

Han lyf and dwellyng in another place.
And African seyde, 'Ye, withoutē drede,'
And that our present worldēs lyvēs space
Nis but a maner deth, what wey we trace,
And rightful folk shul gon after they dye
To hevene; and shewēde him the Galaxye.

Than shewede he hym the litel erthe
that here is,—

At regard of the hevenēs quantitē,—
And after shewede he hym the nynē sperēs,
And after that the melodye herde he 60
That cometh of thilkē sperēs thryēs three,
That welle is of musik and melodye
In this world heer, and cause of armonye.

31. Marcus Tullius Cicero, whose *Somnium Scipionis* was originally included in the *De Republica*, Bk. vi.

36. Scipioun, P. Cornelius Scipio Æmilianus Africanus Minor, who won the third Punic War. He went in 150 B.C. to meet Masinissa, King of Numidia, who had received many favours from 'his auncestre' Africanus Major.

61, 62. An allusion to the so-called 'harmony of the spheres' which arose from the supposed connection between the number of the planets and

Than bad he him, syn erthē was so lyte,
And ful of torment and of hardē grace,
That hene schulde him in the world delyte.
Thanne tolde he him in certeyn yerēs space
That everysterre shulde come into his place
Ther it was first, and al shulde out of mynde
That in this world is don of al mankynde.

Than prayde him Scipioun to telle hym al
The weye to come in-to that hevenē blisse;
And he seyde, 'Know thy-self first
immortāl,

And loke ay besily thow werche and wysse
To comoun profit, and thow shalt not mysse
To comēn swiftly to that placē dere
That ful of blysse is and of soulēs clere.

'But brekers of the lawē, soth to seyn,
And lecherous folk, after that they be dede,
Shul whirle a-boutē the erthe alwey in
peyne, 80

Til many a world be passēd, out of drede,
And than, for-yeven alle hir wikked dede,
Than shul they come in-to that blysful place,
To which to comēn God thee sende his
grace!'

The day gan failen, and the derkē nyght,
That reveth bestēs from hir besynesse,
Beraftē me my book for lakke of lyght,
And to my bed I gan me for to dresse,
Fulfilde of thought and besy hevynesse; 89
For bothe I haddē thyng which that I nolde,
And ek I ne haddē that thyng that I wolde.

But fynally, my spirit at the laste,
For-wery of my labour al the day,
Took rest, that madē me to slepē faste;
And in my sleep I mette, as that I lay,
How African right in the same aray
That Scipioun him saw before that tyde
Was come and stood right at my beddēs
syde.

the number of musical notes in the scale. Cp. Shak. *M. of V.* v. 60.

80. *whirle a-boute*, 'volutantur,' Cicero.

85 f. Cp. *Inferno*, ii. 1-3.

Lo giorno se n' andava, e l' aer bruno
Toglieva gli animai, che sono in terra
Dalle fatiche loro.

90. Cp. Boethius, Bk. iii. pr. 3.

The very hunter, slepyng in his bed,
To wode aye in his mynde goth anon ; 100
The jugé dremeth how his plees ben sped ;
The carter dremeth how his carte is goon ;
The riche of gold ; the knyght fight with
his foen ;
The syké met he drynketh of the tonne ;
The lover met he hath his lady wonne.

Can I not seyn if that the causé were
For I hadde red of African beforne,
That madé me to mete that he stood there,
But thus seyde he : 'Thou hast thee so
wel born
In loking of myn oldé book to-torn, 110
Of which Macrobie roghté not a lyte,
That somdel of thy labour wolde I quyte.'

Cytherea, thou blisful lady swete,
That with thy fyrbrond dauntest whom
thee lest,
And madest me this sweven for to mete,
Be thou my helpe in this, for thou mayst
best
As wisly as I say the north-north-west,
Whan I began myn sweven for to wryte ;
So yif me myght to ryme it and endyte.

The Story

This forseyd African me hente a-noon,
And forth-with him unto a gate me broghte
Right of a park, walléd with grené stoon ;
And over the gate with lettrés large
y-wroghte
There werén vers y-written, as me thoghte,
On cyther syde of ful gret difference,
Of which I shal now seyn the pleyn
sentence.

'Thurgh me men goon in-to that blisful
place
Of hertés hele and dedly woundés cure ;
Thurgh me men gon un-to the welle of
Grace

99. Cp. Claudian, *In Sextum Consulatum Honorii Augusti Prefatio*, ll. 3-10.

109. Cp. *Inferno*, i. 83.

113. *Cytherea*, Venus.

117. A reference to the planet Venus. *say*, saw.

127. Cp. *Inferno*, iii. 1 ff.

Ther grene and lusty May shal ever
endure ; 130
This is the way to al good aventure ;
Be glad, thow rede and thysorwe-of-caste.
Al open am I, pas in and sped the
faste !'

'Thurgh me men gon,' than spak that
other syde,
'Unto the mortal strokés of the spere
Of which Disdaynand Daunger is thegyde,
Ther never tre shal fruyt ne levés bere.
This stream you ledeth to the sorful were
Ther as the fish in prison is al drye ;
Theschewyng is only the remedye.' 140

Thise vers of gold and blak y-written
were,
The whiche I gan a-stonied to be-holde ;
For with that oon encrescde ay my fere,
And with that other gan myn herté bolde ;
That oon me hette, that other dide me
colde ;
No wit hadde I, for errour, for to chese
To entre or fleen, or me to save or lese.

Right as be-twixén adamauntés two
Of even myght a pece of yrén set, 149
That hath no myght to mevé to ne fro,—
For what that oon may hale that other let,—
Ferde I, that nysté whether me was best
To entre or leve, til African, my gyde,
Me hente, and shoof in at the gatés wyde.

And seyde, 'It stondeth written in thy
face
Thyn errour, though thou telle it not to me,
But dred thee not to come in-to this place,
For this wrytyng nis no thyng ment by thee,
Ne by noon, but he Lovés servaunt be,
For thou of love hast lost thy tast, I gesse,
As seek man hath of swete and bitternesse.

'But nathéles, al-though that thou be
dulle, 162
Yit that thou canst not do, yit mayst thou se,
For many a man that may not stonde a
pulle,
It liketh him at wrastlyng for to be,
And demén yit wher he do bet or he ;

And, if thou haddest cunnyng for tendite,
I shal thee shewè mater of to write.'

With that myhond in his he took a noon,
Of which I comfort caughte, and wente
in faste ; 170
But Lord ! so I was glad and wel begoon !
For overal wher that I myn eyen caste
Were 'treës clad with leves that ay shal
laste,
Eche in his kynde, of colour fresch and
grene
As emeraude, that joye it was to sene.

The bildere ook and eek the hardy asshe ;
The piler elm, the cofre unto careyne ;
The boxtree piper ; holm to whippè lasshe ;
The saylyng firr ; the cipres, deth to
pleyne ;
The sheter ew ; the asp for shaftès pleyne ;
The olyve of pees, and eek the drunken
vyne ; 181
The victor palm, the laurer to devyne.

A garden saw I ful of blosmy bowès
Up-on a river in a grenc mede,
There as ther swetnesse evermorey-now is ;
With flourès whitè, blewè, yelwe, and rede,
And coldè wellè-stremès, no-thing dede,
That swommen ful of smalè fischès lighte,
With fynnès rede and scalès silver-brighte.

On every bough the briddès herde I
syngè, 190
With voys of angel in her armonye ;
Som besyede hem hir briddès forth to
bryngè.
The litel conyes to hir play gunne hyc ;
And further al aboute I gan aspye
The dredful roo, the buk the hert and
hynde,
Squerels and bestès smale of gentil kynde.

169f. Cp. *Inferno*, iii. 19.
176ff. Cp. *Faery Queene*, I. i. 8, 9. The above
is based on *Teseide*, xi. 22-24, and *R. de ia R.*
1338-1368.

177. *piler elm*, Spenser 'vine-prop elm.'

178. *piper*, i.e. used for pipes or horns.

180. *sheter ew*, because used for bows.

182. *to devyne*, because used for divination.

83-259. Cp. *Teseide*, vii. st. 51-60; also *Kingis
Quair*, st. 31-33, 152, 153.

Of instruments of strengès in acord
Herde I so pleye a ravissyng swetnesse,
That God, that maker is of al and Lord,
Ne herdè never beter, as I gesse ; 200
Therwith a wynd, unnethe it myghte be
lesse,
Made in the levès grene a noysè softe,
Acordant to the foulès songe on-lofte.

The air of that place so attemprè was
That never was grevaunce of hoot ne cold ;
Therewex eek every holsum spice and gras ;
Ne no man may ther wexè seek ne old,
Yit was ther joyè more a thousand fold
Than man can telle ; ne never wolde it
nyghte,
But ay cleer day to any mannès sighte. 210

Under a tre beside a welle, I say
Cupide our lord his arwès forge and file
And at his fet his bowe al redy lay,
And Willehis doghter temprèd al this while
The hedès in the welle ; and with hir wyle
She couchèd hem after as they shuldè
serve,
Som for to slee, and som to wounde and
kerve.

Tho was I war of Plesaunce anon-right,
And of Aray and Lust and Curtesye, 219
And of the Craft that can and hath the
myght
To doon be force a wyght to doon folye ;
Disfigurat was she, I nyl not lyc ;
And by him-self, under an ok I gesse,
Saw I Delyt that stood with Gentillesse.

I saw Beautè, withouten any atyr ;
And Youthè, ful of game and Jolytè ;
Fool-hardinesse, Flattery and Desyr,
Messagerye and Mede and other three,—
Hir namès shal not here be told for me,—
And upon pilers grete of Jasper longe, 230
I saw a temple of bras y-founded stronge.

Aboute the temple daunsèdèn alwey
Wommen y-nowe, of whichè somme ther
were
l'aire of hem-self, and somme of hem
were gay ;

In kirtels, al disshevelé wente they
there,—

That was hir office alwey, yeer be yeer,—
And on the temple of dovès white and
faire

Saw I sittynge many an hundred peire.

Be-fore the temple dore, ful soberly,
Dame Pees sat with a curteyn in hir
hond, 240

And hir besyde, wonder discretly,
Dame Pacience sittynge ther I fond
With facé pale, up-on an hille of sond ;
And aldernext within and eek with-oute,
Beheste and Art, and of hir folk a route.

Within the temple, of syghés hote as
fyr

I herde a swogh that gan abouté renne ;
Whiche syghés were engendred with
desyr

That maden every auter for to brenne
Of newé flaume ; and wel espyed I
thenne 250

That al the cause of sorwés that they
drye

Com of the bitter goddesse Jelousyse.

The god Priapus saw I as I wente
Within the temple, in sovereyn placé
stonde

In swich aray as whan the asse him
shente,

With cry by nyght, and with his ceptre
in honde.

Ful besily men gunne assaye and fonde
Up-on his hede to sette, of sondry hewe
Garlondés ful of freshé flourés newe. 259

And in a privee corner in desporte
Fond I Venus and hir portére Richesse,
That was ful noble and hauteyn of hir
porte ;

Derk was that place, but afterward
lightnesse

I saw a lyte, unnethe it myghte be lesse,
And on a bed of golde she lay to reste
Til that the hoté sonné gan to weste.

255. Cp. Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 415.

260-280. Cp. *Teseide*, vii. st. 63-66.

Hir gilté herés with a golden thred
Y-bounden were, untrusséd as she lay,
And naked fro the breste unto the hed
Men myghte hir seen ; and sothly for to
say, 270

The remenaunt was wel keveréd to my
pay,

Right with a subtil kerchief of Valence,
Ther nas no thikker cloth of no defence.

The placé yaf a thousand savours swote,
And Bachus, god of wyn, sat hir besyde,
And Sereis next, that doth of hungir
bote ;

And as I seyde, amyddés lay Cypride,
To whom, on knees two yongé folkés cryde
To ben hir help ; but thus I let hir lyte,
And ferther in the temple I gan espye 280

That, in dispit of Diané the chaste,
Ful many a bow y-broke heng on the wal,
Of maydens swiche as gunne hir tymés
waste

In hir servyse ; and peynted overal
Ful many a story of which I touché shal
A fewe, as of Calyxte and Athalante,
And many a mayde of which the name I
wante :

Semyramus, Candace and Herculés,
Biblis, Dido, Thisbé, and Piramus,
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achillés, 290
Eleync, Cleopatre, and Troilus,
Silla, and eek the moder of Romulus,—

272. *Valence*, probably Valence near Lynos, where silk is still made. Boccaccio has 'Testa, tanta sottile'.

276. *Sereis*, Ceres.

277. *Cypride*, i.e. Venus, because of her worship in Cyprus.

281-294. Cp. *Teseide*, vii. st. 61, 62.

286. *Calixte*, daughter of Lycaon, King of Arcadia, and mother of Arcas, changed by Juno from jealousy into a she-bear, and raised to heaven by Jupiter as Ursa Major.

288. *Semyramus*, Semiramis, Queen of Assyria.

288. *Candace*, an Indian queen loved by Alexander the Great.

290. *Tristram, Isoude*, Tristram (or Tristan) and Ysolde (Ysolt) of French mediæval romance.

292. *Silla*, Scylla, daughter of Nisus, who for love of Minos cut off her father's hair, on which his life depended, and was turned into the bird Ciris.

297. *moder of Romulus*, Ilia or Rhea Silvia, daughter of Numitor.

Alle these were peynted on that other
syde,
And al hir love and in what plyt they
dyde.

Whan I was come ayen un-to the
place
That I of spak, that was so swote and
grene,
Forth welk I tho my-selven to solace.
Tho was I war wher that ther sat a
quene
That as of light the somer-sunnè shene
Passeth the sterre, right so over mesure 300
She fairer was than any creature.

And in a launde upon an hille of
flourès
Was set this noblè goddessè Nature.
Of braunchès were hir hallès and hir
bourès
Y-wrought after hir craft and hir mesure ;
Ne there nas foul that cometh of engen-
drure,
That they ne werè prest in hir presence,
To take hir doom and yeve hir audience.

For this was on Seynt Valentynès
day,
Whan every bryd cometh ther to chese
his make, 310
Of every kyndè that men thynkè may ;
And that so huge a noysè gan they makè,
That erthe and eyr and tre and every
lake
So ful was, that unnethè was there space
For me to stonde, so ful was al the
place.

And right as Aleyn, in the Pleynt of
Kynde,
Devyseth Nature of aray and facc,
In swich aray men myghtèn hir ther
fynde.
This noble empèressè, ful of grace,
Bad every foul to take his ownè place, 320

316. A reference to the *Planctus Naturæ* of
Alanus de Insulis, or Alain Delille, a poet of the
12th century.

319. MSS. unanimous as to this line.

As they were wont alwey fro yeer to yere
Seynt Valentynès day to stonden there.

That is to seyn, the foulès of ravyne
Were hyst set, and than the foulès
smale,
That eten as hem nature wolde enclyne,
As worm or thyng, of whiche I telle no
tale ;
And water-foul sat lowest in the dale,
But foul that lyveth by seed sat on the
grene,
And that so fele that wonder was to sene.

There myghtè men the royal egle fynde,
That with his sharpè look persèth the
sonne ; 331
And other eglès of a lower kynde,
Of whiche that clerkès wel devysè cunne.
Ther was the tyraunt with his fethrès donne
And greye, I mene the goshawk that doth
pyne
To bryddès for his outrageous ravyne.

The gentil faucon that with his feet
distreyneth
The kyngès hond ; the hardy sperhawk
eke, 338
The quaylès foo ; the merlion that peyneth
Hym-self ful ofte the larkè for to seke ;
There was the douvè, with hir eyèn meke ;
The jalous swan, ayens his deth that
syngeth ;
The oule eke, that of deth the bodè
bryngeth ;

The crane the geaunt, with his trompès
sounè ;
The theef the chough, and eek the
jangelyng pye ;
The scornynge jay ; the elès foo, the
herounè ;
The falsè lapwyng, ful of trecherye ;
The starè, that the counseyl can be-wrye ;
The tamè ruddok, and the coward kyte ;
The cok, that orloge is of thorpès lyte ;

342, 343. From Alanus ; cp. *Anglo-Latin
Satirical Poets*, vol. ii. p. 74 (Record Series).
Most of the natural history of this whole passage
comes from him.

The sparwé, Venus sone ; the nyhtyn-
gale, 351
That clepeth forth the grené levés newe ;
The swallow, mortrer of the flyés smale,
That maken hony of flourés fresshe of
hewe ;
The wedded turtel, with hire herté trewe,
The pecok, with his aungels fethrés
bright ;
The fesaunt, scorner of the cok by nyght ;

The waker goos ; the cuckow ever un-
kynde ;
The popynjay, ful of delicasye ; 359
The draké, stroyer of his owné kynde ;
The stork, the wreker of avouterie ;
The hoté cormeraunt of glotenye ;
The raven wys ; the crow, with vois of care ;
The throstel old ; the frosty feldéfare.

What shulde I seyn ? Of foulés every
kynde
That in this world han fethrés and stature,
Men myghtén in that place assembled fynde
Before the noble goddessé Nature.
And everich of hem did his besy cure
Benygnely to chese or for to take 370
By hir acord his formel or his make.

But to the poynt,—Nature held on
hir hond
A formel egle, of shap the gentilésté
That ever she a-mong hire werkés fond ;
The moste benygné and the goodliésté ;
In hir was every vertu at his reste
So ferforth, that Nature hir-selfe hadde
blisse
To loke on hir and ofte hir bek to kisse.

Nature, the vicaire of the almyghty
Lord,
That hoot, cold, hevvy, light, and moist,
and dreye 380
Hath knyght, with evené noumbrés of a-cord,
In esy vois began to speke and seye,
'Foulés, tak hede of my sentence, I preye,

351. The sparrow was sacred to Venus.
361. Cp. Neckam, *Liher de Naturis Rerum*
(Ed. Wright, lib. i. c. 64).
363. *with vois of care*, a mistranslation of
Virgil, *Georg.* i. 388.

And, foryourese in furtheryng of yournede,
As faste as I may speke I wol me speede.

'Ye know wel how seynt Valentynés day,
By my statut and through my governaunce,
Ye comen for to chese—and flee your
way—

Your makés, as I prike yow with plesaunce ;
But nathéles my rightful ordénaunce 390
May I nat lete for al this world to wynne,
That he that most is worthy shal begynne.

'The tercel egle, as that ye knowén wel,
The foul royal, a-bove yow in degree,
The wyse and worthy, secree, trewe as stel,
The which I have y-formed, as ye may see,
In every part as it best liketh me,—
Hit nedeth not his shap yow to devyse,—
He shal first chese and speken in his gyse.

'And after him by order shul ye chese,
After your kyndé, everich as yow lyketh,
And as your hap is shul ye wynne or lese ;
But which of yow that lové most entriketh
God sende him hir that sorest for him
syketh.'
And therewithal the tercel gan she calle,
And seyde, 'My sone, the choys is to
thee falle.

'But nathéles, in this condicioun
Mot be the choys of everich that is here,
That she a-gree to his eleccioun,
Who-so he be that shuldé be hir fere ; 410
This our usage alwey from yeer to yere,
And who-so may at thistyme have his grace,
In blisful tyme he com into this place.'

With hed enclynéd and with humblé
chere
This royal tercel spak, and taried nought :
'Un-to my sovereyn lady, and nought
my fere—
I chese, and chese with wille and herte
and thought,
The formel on your hond, so wel y-wrought,
Whos I am al and ever wol hir serve, 419
Do what hir list, to do me live or sterve.

411. *This* is this. Cp. ll. 620, 649 ; also *K. T.*
233 and 885.

'Besechyng hir of mercy and of grace,
As she that is my lady sovereyne ;
Or let me dyé present in this place ;
For certés, longe I may nat live in payne,
For in myn herte is corven every veyne ;
And havying réward only to my trouthe,
My deré herte have of my wo som routhé !

'And if that I to hir be founde untrewé,
Disobeysaunt, or wilful negligent,
Avauntour, or in proces love anewe, 430
I preye to yow this be my jugément,
That with these foulés be I al to-rent,
That ilké day that ever she me fynde
To hir untrewé, or in my gilt unkynde.

'And, syn that noon loveth hir so welas I,
Al be she never of lovè me behette,
Thanoughté she be myn thourgh hir mercy,
For other bond can I noon on hir knette ;
Ne never for no wo ne shal I lette 439
To serven hir, how fer so that she wende ;
Say what yow list, my tale is at an ende.'

Right as the fressshé, redé rosé newe
A-yen the somer sonnè coloured is,
Right so for shame al wexén gan the hewe
Of this formel. Whan she herde al this,
She neyther answerdè 'Wel,' ne seyde
amys,
So sore abashedd was she, til that Nature
Seyde, 'Doughter, dred yow nought, I
yow assure.'

Another tercel egle spak anoon,
Of lower kynde, and seyde, 'That shal
not be !' 450
I love hir bet than ye do, by Seynt John !
Or atté leste I love as wel as ye,
And lenger have servéd hir in my degree ;
And if she shulde have loved for long
lovyng,
To me allone hadde been the guerdonyng.

'I dar eek seyn, if she me fyndé fals,
Unkynde, janglere, or rebel any wyse,
Or jalous, do me hangen by the hals !
And, but I beré me in hir servyse, 459
As wel as that my wit can suffyse,

Fro poynt to poynt hir honour for to save,
Tak she my lif and al the good I have.'

The thriddè tercel egle answérdè tho,
'Now, sirs, ye seen the litel leyser here,
For every foul cryeth out to ben a-go
Forth with his make, or with his ladydere,
And eek Nature hir-self ne wol not here,
Fortaryng here, not half that I wolde seye,
And but I speke I mot for sorwé deye.

'Of long servyse avaunte I me nothing
But as possible is me to deye to-day 471
For wo, as he that hath ben languysshying
Thise twenty winter, and wel happen may
A man may servén bet and more to pay
In half a yer, although it were no more
Than som man doth that hath servéd ful
yore.

'I ne sey not this by me, for I ne can
Don no servyse that may my lady plesé ;
But I dar seyn I am hir trewest man, 479
As to my dom, and feynest wolde hir ese ;
At shorté wordés, til that deth me sese,
I wol ben hircs, whether I wake or wyneke,
And trewe in al that herté may bethynke.'

Of al my lyf syn that day I was born
So gentil ple in love or other thyng
Ne herdé never no man me beforé,
Who-so that haddé leyser and cunningyng
For to reherse hir chere and hir spekyng :
And from the morwé gan this spechè laste
Tildounward drow the sonnè wonder faste.

The noyse of foulés for to ben delyveréd
So loudé rong, 'Have doon and let us
wende !'
That wel wende I the wode hadde al to-
shyveréd.

'Come of !' they cryde, 'allas, ye wil
us shende !
Whan shal your cursed pleyng have an
ende ?
How shulde a jugé cyther party leve
For yee or nay, with-outen any preve ?'

The goos, the cokkow, and the doker
also,

445. A short line, but so in all MSS. Perhaps
hadde herd is the true reading.

So cryden, 'Kek, kek !' 'Kokkow !'
'Quek, quck !' hye, 499

That thurghmyn eres the noysse wentè tho.
The goos seyde, 'Al this nys not worth
a flye !

But I can shape hereof a remedye,
And I wol sey my verdit faire and swythe,
For water-foul, who-so be wrooth or
blythe.'

'And I for worm-foul !' quod the fol
cokkow ;

'And I wol of myn owne autorité,
For comun sped take on the chargè now,—
For to delyvere us is gret charité.'

'Ye may abyde a whilè yet, *pardè !*'
Seidè the turtill, 'if it be your wille 510
A wight may speke, him were as fayr be
stille.'

'I am a seed-foul, oon the unworthieste,
That wot I wel, and litel of cunnyng,
But bet is that a wyghtès tongè reste,
Than entrèmetèn him of swiche doyng
Of which he neyther redè can, ne synge ;
And who-so doth, ful foule himself acloyeth,
For office uncommytted ofte anoyeth.'

'Naturè, which that alway hadde an ere
To murmur of the lewèdnes behynde, 520
With facound voyse seyde, 'Hold your
tunggès there !

And I shal sone, I hope, a conseyl fynde,
Yow to delyvere, and fro this noyse un-
bynde.

I juge, of every flok men shal oon calle
To seyn the verdit for yow foulès alle.'

Assentèd were to this conclusioun
The briddès alle ; and foulès of ravyne
Han chosen first, by playn eleccioun,
The tercelet of the faucon, to diffyne 529
Al hir sentence as him list to termyne ;
And to Nature him gonnèn to presente,
And she accepteth him with glad entente.

The tercelet seidè then in this manèr :
'Ful hard were hit to prevèn by resoun
Who loveth best this gentil formel here,
For everich hath swich replicacioun

That noon by skillès may be brought a-
doun ;

I can not se that arguments avayle ;
Than semeth hit ther mustè be batayle.'

'Al redy !' quod these eglès tercels
tho. 540

'Nay, sirs,' quod he, 'if that I dorste
it seye

Ye doon me wrong, myn tale is not y-do,
For sirs, ne taketh nought a-gref, I preye,
It may not gon, as ye wolde, in this weye ;
Oure is the voys that han the charge in
honde,

And to the jugès dome ye moten stonde ;

'And therfor, pes ! I seye, as to my wit,
Me woldè thynke how that the worthieste
Of knyghthode, and lengest hath usèd hit,
Moste of estat, of blod the gentileste, 550
Were sittynge for hir, if that hir leste,
And of these thre she wot hir-self, I trowe,
Which that he be, for hit is light to knowe.'

The water-foulès han her hedès leyd
Togedre, and of a short avysèment,
Whan everich hadde his largè golee seyde,
They seyden sothly, al by oon assent,
How that the 'goos, with hir facoundègent,
That so desyreth to pronounce our nede,
Shal telle our tale,' and preyden 'god hit
spede.' 560

And for these water-foulès tho began
The goos to speke, and in hir kakelynge
Sheseydè, 'Pees ! now tak keepeveryman,
And herkeneth which a resoun I shal
brynge ;

My wit is sharp, I love no tarynge ;
I seye, I rede him, though he were my
brother,
But she wol love him let him take another.'

'Lo here ! a perfit resoun of a goos !'
Quod tho the sperhauke, 'never mot she
the !

Lo, sich it is to have a tungè loos ! 570
Now pardè, fool, yet were it bet for the
Han holde thy pes, than shewed thy
nyceté !

It lyth nat in his wit, nè in his wille,
But sooth is seyd, "a fool can noght be
stille."

The laughter aroos of gentil foulès alle,
And right-a-noon the seed-foul chosen hadde
The turtel trewe, and gunne hir to hem calle
And preyden hir to seyn the sothè sadde
Of this matere, and askèd what she radde.
And she answerde, that pleyntly hir entente
She woldè shewe, and sothly what she
mente.

581

'Nay, god forbede a lover shuldè
chaunge!'
The turtel seyde; and wex for shamè red;
'Though that his lady ever more be
straunge,
Yet let him serven hir til he be deed.
Forsothe I preysè noght the goosès reed,
For though she deyede I wol non other
make,
I wol ben hires til that the deth me take!'

'Wel bourdèd,' quod the dokè, 'by my
hat!
That men shul lovèn alwey, causèles, 590
Who can a resoun fynde, or wit in that?
Daunceth he murly that is myrthèles?
Who shuldè recche of that is recchèles?
Ye, kek!' yit seyde the gos, ful wel
and fayre,
'There been mo sterrès, god wot, than a
payre!'

'Now fy, cherl!' quod the gentil tercèlet,
'Out of the donghil com that word ful right,
Thou canst not see what thyng is wel be-set;
Thow farest by love as oulès doon by light,
The day hem blent, but wel they sen by
nyght; 600
Thy kynde is of so lowe a wretchednesse,
That what love is thow canst nat see ne
gesse.'

Thou gan the cuckow put him forth in
prees

574. Cp. 'A fool's bolt is soon shot,' *As You
Like It*, v. 4, 67, and *Henry V.* iii. 7, 132.
594. So Ha., except that it reads *Za queke*.

For foul that eteth worm, and seyde blythe,
'So I,' quod he, 'may have my make in
pees

I recchè nat how longè that ye stryve;
Lat ech of hem be soleyn al hir lyve;
This is my reed, syn they may not acorde,
This shortè lessoun nedeth not recorde.'

'Ye! have the glotoun fild y-nogh his
panche, 610
Than are we wel,' seyde the merlioun;
'Thow morder of the heysugge on the
braunche
That broghte thee forth! thou [rewthèles]
glotoun!

Live thou soleyn, wormès corrupcioun!
For no fors is of lakke of thy nature!
Go, lewèd be thou, while the world may
dure!'

'Now pees,' quod Nature, 'I comaundè
here!
For I have herd al your opynyoun,
And in effect yet be we never the nere;
But fynally, this my conclusioun,— 620
That she hir-self shal han the eleccioun
Of whom hir list, who-so be wrooth or
blythe,
Him that she cheseth, he shal hir han as
swythe;

'For syn it may not here discussèd be
Who loveth hir best, as seyde the tercèlet,
Than wol I don hir this favour, that she
Shal han right him on whom hir herte is
set,
And he hir that his herte hath on hir knet,
Thus juge I, Nature, for I may not lye
To non estat, I have non othir yè. 630

'But as for conseyll for to chese a make,
If I were Resoun, certès than wolde I
Conseyllè yow the royal tercel take,
As seyde the tercèlet ful skylfully,
As for the gentilest and most worthy
Which I have wrought so wel to my
plesaunce
That to yow oughtè been a suffisaunce.'

613. Skeat's emendation for *reuful* of most
MSS. *Cg. reufulltes; P. rowthfull.*

With dredful vois the formel hir
answerde :

'Myn rightful lady, goddesse of Nature,
Soth is that I am ever under your yerde,
Like as is everich other creature, 641
And mot ben yourès whil my lyf may dure;
And therfor graunteth me my firstè bone,
And myn entent I wolyowseyn right sone.'

'I graunte it yow,' quod she, and right
a-non

This formel egle spak in this degre :
'Almyghty quene, unto this yer be gon
I askè réspit for to a-visé me,
And after that to have my choys al fre ;
This al and som that I wol speke and
seye ;
Ye gete no more al-though ye do me deye.

'I wol not servén Venus ne Cupide,
For sothe as yet, by no manèrè weye.'
'Now, syn it may non otherweys betyde,'
Quod tho Nature, 'here is no more to
seye ;
Than wolde I that these foulès were a-weye,
Ech with his make, for taryng lenger
here,'—
And seyde hem thus, as ye shul after here.

'To you speke I, ye tercelets,' quod
Nature,
'Beth of good herte and serveth, alle thre ;
A yeer nis nat so longè to endure, 661
And ech of yow peyne him in his degré
For to do well ; for, God wot, quit is she
Fro you this yeer ; what after so be-falle ;
This entremès is dresséd for you alle.'

And whan this werk al broght was to
an ende,
To every foulè Nature yaf his make
Byeven acorde, and on hir wey they wende ;
And, Lord, the blisse and joyè that they
make !
For ech gan other in his wyngès take, 670
And with hir nekkès ech gan other wynde,
Thankyng alwey the noble quene of kynde.

But first were chosen foulès for to synge,
As, yeer be yere, was alwey hir usance
To synge a roundel at hir departyng,
To don to Nature honour and plesaunce.
The note, I trowe, y-makéd was in
Fraunce ;
The wordès were swiche as ye may here
fynde
The nextè vers, as I now have in mynde.

'Now welcom, somer, with thy sonnè softe,
That hast this wintrès weders over-
shake 681
And driven a-wey the longè nyghtès blake ;

Seynt Valentyn, that art ful hy on lofte,
Thus syngèn smalè foulès for thy sake
*Now welcom, somer, with thy sonnè
softe,
That hast this wintrès weders over-
shake.*

Wele han they causè for to gladèn ofte,
Sith ech of hem recoveréd hath his make ;
Ful blisful mowe they ben when they
awake.

*Now welcom, somer, with thy sonnè
softe, 690
That hast this wintrès weders over-
shake
And driven a-wey the longè nyghtès
blake ;'*

And with the showtyng whan the song
was do
That foulès madèn at hir flight away,
I wook, and other bokès tok me to,
To rede up-on ; and yet I rede alwey ;
In hope y-wys to redè so sum day,
That I shall metè somthyng for to fare
The bet ; and thus to rede I nyl not spare.

675. *roundel*, also called *triolet* in its oldest
form, a short poem in which the first line or lines
recur in the middle and at the end.

676. All but Gg. om. second to.
685 f. These lines are not repeated either here
or at l. 690 ff. in Gg. and Jo., the only MSS.
which give the roundel. In Jo. the first three lines
are wanting altogether.

BOECE

INCIPIT LIBER BOECII DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIE

'*Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi.*'—Metrum I

ALLAS ! I, wepynge, am constreyned to bygynnen vers of sorwful matere, that whilom in florysschyng studie made delitable ditees. For lo ! rendyng Muses of poetes enditen to me thynges to ben writen, and dreery vers of wrecchidnesse weten my face with verray teres.

At the leeste, no drede ne myghte overcomen tho Muses, that thei ne were felawes, and folwyden my wey (that is to seyn, whan I was exiled). They that weren glorie of my youthe, whilom weleful and grene, conforten now the sorwful wyerdes of me, olde man. For celde is comyn unwarly uppon me, hasted by the harmes that y have, and sorwe hath comandid his age to ben in me. [5] Heeris hore arn schad over-tymeliche up-on myn heved, and the slakke skyn trembleth of myn emptid body.

Thilke deth of men is weleful that ne comyth noght in yeeris that ben swete, but cometh to wrecches often yclepid. Allas ! allas ! with how deef an ere deth, cruwel, turneth away fro wrecches, and nayteth to closen wepyng eien. Whil fortune, unfeithful, favourede me with

lyghte goodes, the sorwful houre (that is to seyn, the deth) hadde almoost dreynt myn heved. But now, for fortune cloudy hath chaunged hir deceyvable chere to me ward, myn unpious lif draweth along unagreable duellynges in me. [10]

O ye, my frendes, what, or wher-to avauted ye me to be weleful ? For he that hath fallen stood noght in stedefast degre.

'*Hec dum mecum tacitus.*'—Prosa I

In the mene while that I, stille, recordede these thynges with my-self, and merkid my weply compleynte with office of poyntel, I sawe, stondyng aboven the heighte of myn heved, a womman of ful greet reverence by semblaunt, hir eien brennyng and cleer seyng over the comune myghte of men ; with a lifly colour and with swich vigour and strengthe that it ne myghte nat ben emptid, al were it so that sche was ful of so greet age that men ne wolden not trowen in no manere that sche were of our elde. [15] The stature of hire was of a doutous jugement, for som-tyme sche constreyned and schronk hir-selven lik to the comune mesure of men, and som-tyme it semede that sche touchede hevене with the heighte of here heved ; and whan sche hef hir heved heyere, sche percede the selve hevене so that the sighte of men lokyng was in ydel.

Hir clothes weren makid of right delye thredes and subtile craft, of perdurable matere, the whiche clothes sche hadde

10. *unpious*, 'impia.' C₁ H Cx. A₂ omit *in me*.

11. *what* here, as often, is Chaucer's translation of 'quid,' 'why.'

18. Supply 'with' before *subtile*. In the Latin *the beaute* belongs to the next sentence, 'Quarum speciem,' etc.

For the relation of MSS. see Introduction.

Abbreviations.—C₁, Camb. Univ. Libr. II. i. 38; A₂, Brit. Mus. Additional 16,165; H, Brit. Mus. Harleian 2421; Cx., Caxton's Ed.; B., Bodleian Libr., Bodley 797; C₂, Camb. Univ. Libr. II. 3. 21; A₁, Brit. Mus. Add. 10,340; Hn., the Hengwrt Fragment, MS. Peniarth 393; Com., the fragment of a commentary in Bodl. MS. Auct. F. 3. 5; Fr., Bibl. Nat. Fonds Franc. 1079, or French text in general; L, Bibl. Nat. Fonds Lat. 18,424 (French and Latin parallel text); Lat., Latin text of Obbarius, Jena 1843; Aq., the so-called Aquinas Commentary.

4. *wywerdes*, 'fata.'

woven with hir owene handes, as I knewe wel aftir by hir-selve declarynge and schewynge to me the beaute. The whiche clothes a derknesse of a for-leten and despised elde hadde duskid and dirked, as it is wont to dirken besmokede ymages. In the nethereste hem or bordure of these clothes, men redded y-woven in a Grek-issch P (that signifieth the lif actif); [20] and aboven that lettre, in the heiceste bordure, a Grekyssh T (that signifieth the lif contemplatif). And bytwixen these two lettres ther were seyn degrees nobly y-wrought in manere of ladders, by whiche degrees men myghten clymben fro the nethereste lettre to the uppereste.

Natheles handes of some men hadden korve that cloth by violence and by strengthe, and everich man of hem hadde boren away swiche peces as he myghte geten. And for sothe this forseide womman bar smale bokis in hir right hand, and in hir left hand sche bar a ceptre. And whan she saughe these poetical Muses aprochen aboute my bed and enditynge wordes to my wepynges, sche was a litil amoeved, and glowede with cruel eighen. [25] 'Who,' quod sche, 'hath suffred aprochen to this sike man these comune strompettis of swich a place that men clepen the theatre; the whiche not oonly ne asswage nocht his sorwes with none remedies, but thei wolden fedyn and noryssen hym with sweete venyn. For sothe these ben tho that with thornes and piikkynge of talentes or affecciouns, whiche that ne bien nothyng fructifyenge nor profitable, destroyen the corne plentyvous of fruytes of resoun. For thei holden hertes of men in usage, but thei delyvre nocht folk fro maladye. But yif ye muses hadden with-drawn fro me with youre

flateries, any unkunynge and unprofitable man as men ben wont to fynde comonly among the peple, I wolde wene suffre the lasse grevously; [30] for-why, in swych an unprofitable man, myne ententes weren nothyng endamaged. But ye with-drawn me this man, that hath ben noryssed in the studies or scoles of Eleaticis and of Achademycis in Grece. But goth now rather away, ye mermaidenes, whiche that ben swete til it be at the laste, and suffreth this man to be-cured and heeled by myne muses (that is to seyn, by noteful sciences). And thus this compaignie of Muses, I-blamed, casten wrathly the chere downward to the erthe, and, schewing by rednesse hir schame, thei passeden sorwfully the thresschefolde. And I, of whom the sighte, ploungid in teeres, was dirked so that y ne myghte nocht knowen what that womman was of so imperial auctorite, [35] I wax al abayssched and astoned, and caste my syghte down to the erthe, and bygan, stille, for to abide what sche wolde doon aftirward. Tho com sche ner, and sette her down uppon the uttereste corner of my bed; and sche, byholdynge my chere that was cast to the erthe hevy and grevous of wepynge, compleynede, with these wordis that I schal seyn, the perturbacion of my thought.

'Iteu quam precipiti mersa profundo.'

Metrum 2

'Allas how the thought of this man, dreynt in overthrowynge depnesse, dulleth and for-leteth his propre clernesse, myntynge to gon in-to foreyne dirknesses as ofte as his anoyos bysynes waxeth withoute mesure, that is dryven with werldly wyndes. This man, that whilom was sic, to whom the hevene was opyn and known, and was wont to gon in hevenliche pathes, [40] and saughe the lyghtnesse of the rede sonne, and saughe the sterres of the coole mone, and whiche sterre in hevenc useth wandrynge recourses

39. C₂ A₁ com. *dryven to and fro.*

20, 21. P, T, i.e. Πρακτική, θεωρητική, referring to the two divisions of philosophy.

23. C₁ A₂ H read *or* for *first and*

27. C₁ A₂ read *cornes*.

27. *plentyvous of fruytes*, 'uberem fructibus.'

29. 'Hominum mentes adsuefacti morbo, non liberant.' But Chaucer has mistranslated, 'Tiennent les pensees des hommes en costume et ne les delivrent pas de maladie.'

I-flyt by diverse speeris, this man, overcomere, hadde comprehendid al this by nombres (of acontynge in astronomye). And, over this, he was wont to seken the causes whennes the sounynge wyndes moeven and bysien the smothe watir of the see; and what spirit turneth the stable hevene; and why the sterre ariseth out of the rede est, to fallen in the westrene wawes; and what attempth the lusty houres of the firste somer sesoun, that highteth and apparaileth the erthe with rosene floures; [45] and who maketh that plentyvous autumpne in fulle yeris fletith with hevye grapes. And eek this man was wont to tellen the diverse causes of nature that weren yhidde. Allas! now lyth he emptid of lyght of his thought, and his nekke is pressyd with hevye cheynes, and bereth his chere enclyned adoun for the grete weyghte, and is constrained to loken on the fool erthe!

'Set medicine inquit tempus.'—Prosa 2

'But tyme is now,' quod sche, 'of medycyne more than of compleynt.' Forsothe thanne sche, entyndynge to me ward with al the lookynge of hir eien, seyde:—[50] 'Art nat thou he,' quod sche, 'that whilom, norissched with my melk and fostred with mynemetes, were escaped and comyn in-to corage of a parfit man. Certes I yaf the swiche armures that, yif thou thi-selfe ne haddest first cast hem a-vey, they schulden han defended the in sekernesse that mai nat ben overcomyn. Knowestow me nat? Why artow stille? Is it for schame or for astonyng? It were me levere that it were for schame, but it semeth me that astonyng hath oppreside the.' [55] And whan she say me nat oonly stille, but withouten office of tunge and al downbe, sche leyde hir hand soofly uppon my breest, and seide:

42. *I-flyt by diverse speeris*, 'flexa, i.e. mota, per varios orbes,' refers to the ancient theory of direct and retrograde planetary motions; cp. *Astr.* II. concl. 35.

49. C₁ A₂ H Cx. B A₁ read *soul erthe*; Lat. 'stolidam terram'; Fr. 'la fole terre.'

'Here nys no peril,' quod sche, 'he is fallen in-to a litargye, whiche that is a comune seknesse to hertes that been desceyved. He hath a litil foryeten hym-selfe, but certes he schal lightly remembren hymself, yif it so be that he hath knowen me or now; and that he may so doon, I will wipe a litil his eien that ben dirked by the cloude of mortal thynges.' [60] Thise woordes seide sche, and with the lappe of hir garment, yplited in a frownce, sche dryede myn eien, that weren fulle of the wawes of my wepynges.

'Tunc me discussa.'—Metrum 3

Thus, whan that nyght was discussed and chased a-vey, dirknesses forleten me, and to myn eien repeyred ayen hir firste strengthe. And ryght by ensauple as the sonne is hydd whan the sterres ben clusted (that is to seyn, when sterres ben covered with cloudes) by a swyft wynd that hyghte Chorus, and that the firmament stant dirked with wete plowngy cloudes, and that the sterres nat apeeren upon hevене, so that the nyght semeth sprad upon erthe: yif thanne the wynde that hyghte Boreas, I-sent out of the kaves of the cuntre of Trace, betith this nyght (that is to seyn, chaseth it a-vey), [65] and discovereth the closed day, thanne schyneth Phebus I-schaken with sodeyn light, and smyteth with his beemes in mervcylynge eien.

'Haut aliter tristicie.'—Prosa 3

Ryght so, and noon other wise, the cloudes of sorwe dissolved and doon a-vey, I took hevене, and rescayved mynde to knowe the face of my fisycien; so that I sette myne eien on hir and fastned my lookynge. I byholde my norryce, Philosophic, in whoos houses I

63. *sterres ben clusted*, literal rendering of 'sidera glomerantur.'

68. *I took hevене*, Fr. 'ie pris le ciel,' a literal translation of 'hausi cœlum' (! looked up).

hadde conversed and hauntyd fro my youthe; and I seide thus: 'O thou maystresse of alle vertues, descended from the sovereyne sete, whi arttow comen in-to this solitarie place of myn exil? Artow comen for thou art maad coupable with me of false blames?' [70] 'O!' quod sche, 'my nory, schulde I forsake the now, and schulde I nat parten with the, by comune travaile, the charge that thou hast suffred for envye of my name? Certes it nere nat leveful ne syttinge thyng to philosophie, to leten with-outen companye the weye of hym that is innocent. Schulde I thanne redowte my blame, and agrysen as though ther were by-fallen a newe thyng? For trowestow that philosophie be now alderferst assailed in periles by folk of wykkide maneris? Have I noght stryven with ful greet strif in olde tyme, byfor the age of my Plato, ayens the foolhardynesse of folye? [75] And eek, the same Plato lyvyng, his mayster Socrates deserved victorie of unryghtful deth in my presence. The heritage of the whiche Socrates (the heritage is to seyn, the doctryne of the whiche Socrates in his opinyoun of felicitye, that I clepe welefulnesse) whan that the peple of Epycuriens and Stoyciens and many othre enforceden hem to gon ravysche everyche man for his part (that is to seyn that everych of hem wolde drawn to the defense of his opinyoun the wordes of Socrates), they as in partye of hir preye to-drowen me, cryingng and debatying ther ayens, and korven and to-rente my clothes that I hadde woven with myn handes; and with the cloutes that thei hadden arased out of my clothes, thei wenten a-wey wenyng that I hadde gon with hem every del. [80] In whiche Epycuriens and Stoyciens for as myche as ther semede some traces or steppes of myn abyte, the folie of men wenyng tho Epycuryens and Stoyciens my familiers pervertede some thurw the errour of the wikkide or unkunnyng multitude of hem. (This is to seyn, that, for they semeden philoso-

phres, thei weren pursued to the deth and slayn.) So yif thou ne hast noght knowen the exilyng of Anaxogore, ne the enpoisonyng of Socrates, ne the turmentes of Zeno, for they weren straungiers, yit myghtestow han knowen the Seneciens, and the Canyos, and the Soranas, of whiche folk the renoun is neyther over-oold ne unsollemne. [85] The whiche men no thyng elles broght hem to the deeth, but oonly for thei weren enformyd of myne maneris, and senyde moost unlyk to the studies of wykkid folk. And for-thi thou oughtest noght to wondren thoughte that I, in the byttere see of this lif, be fordryven with tempestes blowyng aboute. In the whiche this is my moste purpoos, that is to seyn to displeen to wikkide men. Of whiche schrewes al be the oost nevere so greet, it is to despise; for it nys nat governyd with no ledere (of resoun), but it is ravysched oonly by fleetyng errour folyly and lightly; and yif they som-tyme, makynge an oost ayens us, assayle us as strengere, our ledere draweth to-gidre his riches in-to his tour, and they ben ententyf aboute sarples and sachelis, unprofitable for to taken. [90] But we that ben heighe above, syker fro alle tumolte and wood noyse, warnstoryd and enclosed in swiche a paleys whider as that chateryng or anoyng folye ne may nat atayne, we scorne swyche ravyneres and henteres of fouleste thynges.

'*Quisquis composito.*'—Metrum 4

Who-so it be that is cleer of vertue, sad and wel ordynat of lyvyng, that hath put under fote the proude weerdes and loketh, up-right, up-on either fortune, he may holden his chere undesconfited.

84. *Anaxogore*, like *Canyos* (and *Soranas*?) below, owes its form to the Latin text.

85. *the Seneciens*, etc., i.e. men like Seneca, Canius, and Soranus. *Seneciens* is probably due to Fr. *Seneciens*.

92. *cleer of vertue*, '*serenus*' glossed '*clarus virtute*.'

The rage ne the manaces of the see, commoevyng or chasyng upward hete from the botme, ne schal nat movee that man. Ne the unstable mowntaigne that highte Visevus, that writhith out thurw his brokene chemeneyes smokyng fieres, ne the wey of thonder leit, that is wont to smyten hye toures, ne schal nat movee that man. Whar-to thanne, o wrecches, drede ye tirauntes that ben wode and felenous withouten ony strengthe? [95] Hope astir no thyng, ne drede nat; and so schaltow desarmen the ire of thilke unmyghty tiraunt. But who so that, qwakyng, dredeth or desireth thyng that nys noght stable of his ryght, that man that so dooth hath cast away his scheeld, and is remoeved from his place, and enlaceth hym in the cheyne with whiche he mai ben drawn.

‘*Sentis ne inquit.*’—Prosa 4

‘Felistow,’ quod sche, ‘thise thynges, and entren thei aughte in thy corage? Artow like an asse to the harpe? Why wepistow, why spillestow teeris? Yif thou abidest after helpe of thi leche, the byhoveth discovre thy wownde.’

Tho I, that hadde gaderyd strengthe in my corage, answeride and seide: ‘And nedeth it yit,’ quod I, ‘of reheryng or of ammonicioun? [100] And scheweth it nat y-noghe by hym-selve the sharpnesse of fortune, that waxeth wood ayens me? Ne moeveth it nat the to seen the face or the manere of this place? Is this the librarye whiche that thou haddest chosen for a ryght certein sege to the in myn hous, there as thow disputeddest ofte with me of the sciences of thynges touchyng dlyvinyte and mankynde? Was thanne myn habit swiche as it is now? Was my face or my chere swyche as now when I soghte with the

the secretis of nature, whan thow enforcedest my maneris and the resoun of al my lif to the ensaumple of the ordre of hevenc? Is noght this the gerdouns that I referre to the, to whom I have ben obeisant? [105]

Certes thou confermedest by the mouth of Plato this sentence, that is to seyne that comune thynges or comunalites weren blisful yif they that hadden studied al fully to wysdom governeden thilke thynges; or elles yif it so befille that the governours of comunalites studieden to geten wysdom. Thou seidest eek by the mouth of the same Plato that it was a necessarie cause wise men to taken and desire the governance of comune thynges, for that the governementz of cites, I-lefte in the handes of felonous turmentours citezeens, ne schulde noght bryngen in pestilence and destruccioun to good folk. And therfore I, folwyng thilke auctorite, desired to putten forth in execution and in acte of comune administracioun thilke thynges that I hadde lernyd of the among my secre restyng-whiles. [110]

Thow and god, that putte the in the thoughtes of wise folk, ben knowyng with me that no thyng ne brought me to maistrie or dignyte but the comune studie of alle goodnesse. And therof cometh it that bytwixen wikkid folk and me han ben grevous discordes, that ne myghte nat ben releessed by preyeris; for this liberte hath fredom of conscience, that the wraththe of more myghty folk hath alwey ben despised of me for savacioun of right. How ofte have I resisted and withstonden thilke man that highte Conigaste, that made alwey assawtes ayens the prospere fortunes of pore feble folk! How ofte eek have I put of or cast out hym Trygwille, provost of the kyngis hous, bothe of the wronges that

93. *hete*, ‘æstum,’ which means ‘surge’ here; cp. 255.

97. *his*, its. Chaucer follows L., ‘estables [et Fr.] de son droit,’ not Lat. ‘stabilis, sive iuris.’

98. *an asse to the harpe*, the Greek proverb *ὄνος λύρας*, through Lat. ‘asinus ad lyram.’

105. *Is noght this*, etc., ‘Hæccine præmia referimus tibi?’

108. *wise men*, etc., gerundive idiom, i.e. ‘for wise,’ etc.

111. *ben knowyng*, etc., ‘mihi conscii,’ but Fr. ‘consachables avecques moi.’

112. *for this*, etc., should be *and*, *for this*, etc.

he hadde bygunne to doon, and ek fully performed ! [115] How ofte have I covered and defended by the auctorite of me put ayens perils (that is to seyn, put myn auctorite in peril for) the wrecche pore folk, that the covetise of straungiers unpunyschid tormentyde alwey with myseses and grevances out of nombre !

Nevere man ne drow me yit fro right to wrong. Whan I say the fortunes and the riches of the peple of the provinces ben harmed or amanued outler be pryve rauynes or by comune tributes or cariages, as sory was I as they that suffriden the harm. (Glosa. Whan that Theoderic, the kyng of Gothes, in a dere yeer, hadde his gerneeris ful of corn, and comaundede that no man schulde byen no coorn til his corn were soold, and that at grevous dere prys, Boece with-stood that ordenaunce and overcome it, knowynge al this the kyng hym-selve. [120] Coempcioun is to seyn comune achat or beyinge to-gidre, that were establised up-on the peple by swiche a manere imposicioun, as whoso boughte a busschel corne, he most yyve the kyng the fyfte part.) Textus. Whan it was in the sowre hungry tyme, ther was establised or cryed grevous and unplitable coempcioun, that men sayen wel it schulde gretly tormenten and endamagen al the provynce of Campayne, I took stryf ayens the provost of the pretorie for comune profit ; and, the kyng knowynge of it, overcom it, so that the coempcioun ne was nat axid ne took effect. Paulyn, a conseller of Rome, the riches of the whiche Paulyn the howndes of the paleys (that is to seyn the officeres) wolden han devoured by hope and covetyse, yit drowe I hym out of the jowes of hem that gapeden. And for as moche as the peyne of the accusacioun ajugid byforn ne schulde noght sodeynli henten ne punysche wrongfully Albyn, a conseller

of Rome, I putte me ayens the hates and indignacions of the accusour Cyprian. [125] Is it not thanne I-noghe sene, that I have purchaced grette discordes ayens my-self? But I oughte be the more assured ayens alle othere folk, that, for the love of rightwisnesse, I ne reservede nevere no thyng to myselve to hem ward of the kyngis halle, by whiche I were the more syker. But thurw the same accusours accusynge I am condempned. Of the nombre of whiche accusours, oon Basilius, that whilom was chased out of the kyngis serveyse, is now compelled in accusynge of my name for nede of foreyne moneye. Also Opilion and Gaudencius han accused me, al be it so that the justise regal hadde whilom demed hem bothe to gon in-to exil for hir trecheries and frawdres withouten nombre, [130] to whiche juggement they nolden nat obeye, but defendeden hem by the sikernes of holi houses (that is to seyn, fledden into seynte warie) ; and whan this was aperceyved to the kyng, he comandise that, but they voydide the cite of Ravenne by certeyn day assigned, that men scholde marken hem in the foiehed with an hoot iren and chasen hem out of towne. Now what thyng semyth myghte ben likned to this cruele? For certes thilke same day was resceyved the accusynge of myn name by thilke same accusours. What may ben seyed her-to? Hath my studie and my kunnyng disserved thus? Or elles the forseide dampnacioun of me --made that hem ryghtfulle accusours or no? Was noght fortune aschamed of this? [135] Certes, al hadde noght fortune ben aschamed that innocence was accused, yit oughte sche han hadde schame of the fylthe of myn accusours. But axestow in somme of what gylt I am

127. to hem ward is due to a mistranslation of 'vers' in 'vers ceus du paliz roial'; Lat. 'apud aulicos.'

129. for nede, etc., 'alieni aeris necessitate.'

132. C₂ C₁ A₂ C_x. B of the town.

116. C₁ C_x. B C₂ read *tormentyden*.
119, 120 refer to what precedes, 121 to what follows.

133. A₂ A₁ *seemeth the*; B *seemeth you*; *likned* should be 'added,' 'posse adstrui.' Chaucer has understood Fr. 'pareille,' p. part. of 'pareiller' (adstruere), as that of *pareiller*, 'to liken.'

accused? Men seyn that I wolde saven the companye of the senatours. And desirerestow to heren in what manere? I am accused that I schulde han disturbed the accusour to beren lettres, by whiche he scholde han makid the senatours gylty ayens the kynges real maieste. O Maystresse, what demestow of this? Schal I forsake this blame, that y ne be no schame to the? Certes I have wolde it (that is to seyn the savacioun of the senat), ne schal I nevere letten to wilne it; and that I confesse and am aknowe; but the entente of the accusour to ben disturbed schal cese. [140] For schal I clepe it thanne a felonye or a synne, that I have desired the savacioun of the ordre of the senat? And certes yit hadde thilke same senat don by me thurw hir decretes and hir jugementes as though it were a synne and a felonye (that is to seyn, to wilne the savacioun of hem). But folye, that lyeth alwey to hym-selve, may noght chaunge the merite of thynges, ne I trowe nat by the jugement of Socrates, that it were levelful to me to hide the sothe, ne assente to lesynges. But certes, how so evere it be of this, I putte it to gessen or prisn to the jugement of the and of wys folk. Of whiche thyng all the ordonaunce and the sothe, for as moche as folk that been to comen afir our dayes schullen knowen it, I have put it in scripture and in remembraunce. [145] For touchynge the lettres falsly makid by whiche lettres I am accused to han hoped the fredom of Rome, what aperteneth me to speken ther-of? Of whiche lettres the fraude hadde ben schewed apertely, yif I hadde had liberte for to han used and ben at the confessioun of myn accusours, the whiche thyng in alle nedes hath greet strengthe. For what other fredom mai men hope? Certes I wolde that som other fredom myghte ben hoped; I wolde thanne han answeyrd

140. and that I confesse, etc., should be *Shal I confesse? 'Fatebimur?'*

147. in alle nedes, 'omnibus negotiis,' 'en toutes besoignes.' Chaucer read 'besoignes' (besogues) as *besoings* (besoins).

by the wordys of a man that hyghte Canyus. For whan he was accused before Gaius Cesar, Germaines sone, that he was knowynge and consentynge of a coniuracioun ymakid ayens hym, this Canyus answeride thus: "Yif I hadde wist it, thou haddest noght wist it." In whiche thyng sorwe hath noght so dullid my wyt, that I pleyne oonly that schrewed folk apparailen felonyes ayens vertu; but I wondre gretly how that thei may performe thynges that thei han hoped for to doon. [150] For-why to wylne schrewydnesse—that cometh peraventure of our defeaute; but it is lyk a monstre and a merveylye, how that, in the presente sight of god, may ben achieved and performed swiche thynges as every felonous man hath conceyved in his thought ayens innocentes. For whiche thyng oon of thy familiars noght unskillfully axed thus: "Yif god is, whennes comen wikkide thyngis? And yif god ne is, whennes comen gode thynges?" But al hadde it ben levelful that felonous folk, that now desiren the blood and the deeth of alle gode men and ek of al the senat, han wilned to gon destroyen me, whom they han seyn alwey bataylen and defenden gode men and eek al the senat, yit hadde I nought disserved of the faderes (that is to seyn, of the senatours) that they schulden wilne my destruccioun. Thow remembrest wel, as I gesse, that whan I wolde doon or seyn any thyng, thow thi-selve alwey present reuledest me. [155] Atte cite of Verone, whan that the kyng, gretly of comune slaughtre, caste hym to transporten up-on al the ordre of the senat the gilt of his real maieste, of whiche gilt that Albyn was accused, with how gret sykernesse of peril to me defended I al the senat! Thow woost wel that I sey sooth, ne I ne awawntede me nevere in preysynge of my-selve. For alwey whan any wyght

153. to gon destroyen, 'perditum ire,' 'aler destruire.'

156. the gilt, etc., 'maiestatis crimen,' 'le blâme de la royal maieste.'

resceyveth precious renoun in avauntynge hym-selve of his werkes, he amenuseth the secre of his conscience. But now thou mayst wel seen to what ende I am comen for myn innocence; I resceyve peyne of fals felonye for guerdoun of verrai vertue. And what opene confessioun of felonye hadde evere juges so accordaunt in cruelte (that is to seyn, as myn accusynge hath) that either error of mannys wit, or elles condicion of fortune, that is uncerteyn to alle mortel folk, ne submyttede some of hem (that is to seyn, that it ne enclynede some juge to have pite or compassioun)? [160] For al-thoughe I hadde ben accused that I wolde brenne holi houses and straunge preestis with wykkid sweerd, or that I hadde greythed deth to alle gode men, algates the sentence scholde han punysshed me present, confessed or convict. But now I am remuved fro the cite of Rome almost fyve hundred thowsand paas, I am withoute deffense dampnyd to proscriptioun and to the deth for the studie and bountes that I have doon to the senat. But O wel ben thei wurthy of meryte! (As who seith, nay.) Ther myghte nevere yit noon of hem ben convicte of swiche a blame as myn is. Of whiche trespas myne accusours sayen ful wel the dignete; the whiche dygnyte, for thei wolden derken it with medlynge of some felonye, they bate me on hande and lieden that I hadde pollut and defouled my conscience with sacrilegie for covetise of dignyte. And certes thou thi-selve, that art plantid in me, chacedest out of the sege of my corage alle covetise of mortel thynges, ne sacrilegie hadde no leve to han a place in me byforn thyne eien. [165] For thou droppiddest every day in myn eris and in my thought thilke comaundement of Pittagoras, that is to seyn men schal serven to god, and noght to goddes.

Ne it was noght convenient ne no nede to taken help of the fouleste spirites—I, that thou hast ordeyned and set in swiche excellence, that thou makedest me lyk to god. And over this, the right clene secre chaumbre of myn hous (that is to seyn my wif), and the companye of myne honeste freendes, and my wyves fadir, as wel holi as worthy to ben reverenced thurw his owene dedes, defenden me fro alle suspecious of swiche blame. But O malice! For they that accusen me taken of the, philosophie, feith of so greet blame, for they trowen that I have had affynite to malefice or enchauntement, bycause that I am replenysshid and fulfild with thy techynges, and enformed of thi maneris. And thus it suffiseth nat oonly that thi reverence ne avayle me nat, but that thou of thy free wil rather be blemesshed with myne offencioun. [170] But certes to the harmes that I have ther bytideth yit this encrees of harm, that the gessynge and the jugement of moche folk loken no thyng to the desertes of thynges, but oonly to the aventure of fortune; and jugen that oonly swiche thynges ben purveied of god, whiche that temporel welefulnesse commendeth. (Glose. As thus: that yif a wyght have prosperite, he is a good man and worthy to han that prosperite; and who-so hath adversite, he is a wikkid man, and god hath forsake hym, and he is worthy to han that adversite. This is the opinyoun of some folk.) Textus. And ther-of cometh that good gessynge, first of alle thynges, forsaketh wrecches. Certes it greveth me to thynke ryght now the diverse sentences that the peple seith of me. [175] And thus moche I seie, that the laste charge of contrarious fortune is this:

167. For was C₁ A₂ H B read *is*; C₂ omits.

168. *the right clene*, etc., 'penetral innocens domus,' i.e. 'my unblemished private life.' Chaucer translates a gloss, 'uxor.'

170. *of thy free wil*, 'ultro,' i.e. 'for thy part'; but Fr. 'de ton gre.'

171. *bytylith*. Chaucer has read 'accedit' as 'accidit.'

157. *the secre*, etc., 'se probantis conscientie secretum (sc. pretium).' The same mistake occurs in Fr.

164. For *lieden* H Cx. read *seyden*, B *seyden* corrected in same hand from *leyden*.

that whan that eny blame is leid upon a caytif, men wenen that he hath desservyd that he suffreth. And I, that am put a-wey fro gode men, and despoyled of dignytes, and defouled of myn name by gessynge, have suffride torment for my gode dedes. Certes me semyth that I se the felonous covynes of wykkid men habounden in joye and in gladnesse; and I se that every lorel schapeth hym to fynde out newe fraudes for to accuse good folk; and I se that goode men ben overthrown for drede of my peril, and every luxurious turmentour dar doon alle felonye unpunyschyd, and ben excited ther-to by yiftes; and innocentes ne ben nocht onoly despoiled of sikernes, but of defence; and ther-fore me lyst to crie to god in this manere:’ [180]

‘*O stelliferi conditor orbis.*’—Metrum 5

‘O thou makere of the wheel that bereth the sterres, whiche that art festnyd to thi perdurable chayer, and turnest the hevene with a ravyschyng sweighe, and constreynest the sterres to suffren thi lawe; so that the moone som-tyme, schynnyng with hir fulle hornes metynge with alle the beemes of the sonne hir brothir, hideth the sterres that ben lasse, and som-tyme, whan the moone pale with hir derke hornes aprocheth the sonne, leeseth hir lyghtes; and that the eve sterre, Hesperus, whiche that in the first tyme of the nyght bryngeth forth hir colde arsynges, cometh eft ayen hir used cours, and is pale by the morwe at rysynge of the sonne, and is thanne clepid Lucyfer! Thow restraynest the day by schortere duellynge in the tyme of coold wynter, that maketh the leeves falle. Thow devydest the swyfte tydes of the nyght, whan the

hote somer is comen. [185] Thy myghte attrepreth the variauntes sesouns of the yer, so that Zephirus, the debonere wynd, bryngeth ayen in the first somer sesoun the leeves that the wynd that hyghte Boreas hath reft away in autumpne (that is to seie, the laste ende of somer); and the seedes that the sterre that highte Aucturus saugh, ben waxen heye cornes whan the sterre Syrius eschaufeth hem. Ther nys no thyng unbounde from his olde lawe, ne foreteth the werk of his propre estat. O governour, governynge alle thynges by certein ende, whi refusetow onoly to governe the werkes of men by duwe manere? Why suffrestow that slydynge fortune turneth so grete enterchaungynge of thynges; so that anoyous peyne, that scholde duweliche punysche felons, punyscheth innocentes? [190] And folk of wikkide maneres sitten in heie chayeres; and anoyinge folk treden, and that unrightfully, on the nekkes of holi men; and vertue, cleer and schynnyng naturely, is hidde in derke derknesses; and the rightful man bereth the blame and the peyne of the feloun; ne the for-swerynge, ne the fraude covered and kembd with a false colour, ne anoieth nat to schrewes? The whiche schrewes, whan hem list to usen hir strengthe, they reioysen hem to putten undir hem the sovereyne kynges, whiche the peple withowten nombre dreden. O thou, what so evere thou be that knytest alle boondes of thynges, loke on thise wrecchide erthes. We men, that ben nocht a foul partie, but a fair partie of so greet a werk, we ben turmented in this see of fortune. Thow governour withdraughe and restrayne the ravyschyng flodes, and fastne and ferme thise erthes stable with thilke boond by whiche thou governest the hevene that is so large.’ [195]

181. *wheel*, etc., ‘*stelliferi orbis*,’ ‘*la roe qui porte les estoiles*.’

181. *festnyd*, ‘*nexus*’ variant of Lat. text for *nexus*.

183. *cometh eft*, etc., i.e. returns in the opposite direction.

186. C₂ A₂ H B in the laste ende.

187. For *saugh*, ‘*vidit*,’ Hn. reads *seugh*, Cx. *sevor*, B *sowyn*.

189. *slydynge fortune*, ‘*lubrica fortuna*.’

'*Hec ubi continuato dolore delatraui.*'—

Prosa 5

Whan I hadde, with a contynuel sorwe, sobbyd or borken out thise thynges, sche, with hir cheere pesible and no thyng amoeved with my compleyntes, seide thus: 'Whan I saugh the,' quod sche, 'sorrowful and wepyng, I wiste anon that thou were a wrecche and exiled; but I wiste nevere how fer thyng exil was yif thy tale ne hadde schewid it me. But certes, al be thou fer fro thy cuntre, thou nart nat put out of it, but thou hast fayled of thi weye and gon a-mys. And yif thou hast levere for to wene that thou be put out of thy cuntre, thanne hastow put out thy-selfe rather than any other wyght hath. For no wyght but thy-selfe myghte nevere han doon that to the. [200] For yif thou remembre of what cunne thou art born, it nys nat governed by emperoures, ne by gouvernement of multitude, as weren the cuntrees of hem of Athenes; but o lord and o kyng, and that is god, is lord of thi cuntre, whiche that reioisseth hym of the duellynge of his citezeens, and nat for to putten hem in exil; of the whiche lord it is a sovereyn fredom to ben governed by the brydel of hym and obeye to his justice. Hastow foryeten thilke ryghte oolde lawe of thi citee, in the whiche cite it is ordeyned and establiysschid, that what wyght that hath levere founden ther-in his sete or his hous than elles where, he may nat ben exiled by no ryght fro that place? For who-so that is contened in-with the palays and the clos of thilke cite, ther nys no drede that he mai deserve to ben exiled; but who that leteth the wil for to enhabyten there, he for-leteth also to deserve to ben citezen of thilke cite. [205] So that

196. *borken*, 'delatraui'; A₁ A₂ H Cx. read *broken*; B *spoken*.

201. *emperoures* is due to the Fr. trans. of 'impero,' 'par empire ne par commandement.'

202. MSS. *that is lord* (B *he is lord*).

204. C₁ A₂ H Cx. A₁ Hn. omit *and the clos*.

I seie that the face of this place ne moeveth me noght as mochel as thyn owene face, ne I ne axe nat rather the walles of thy librarye, apparayled and wrought with yvory and with glas, than after the sete of thi thought, in whiche I put noght whilom bookes, but I putte that that maketh bokes wurthy of prys or precyous, that is to seyn the sentence of my bookes.

And certeynly of thy dessertes bystowed in comune good thou hast seyd soth, but after the multitude of thy gode dedes thou hast seyd fewe. And of the honestete or of the falsnesse of thynges that ben opposed ayens the, thou hast remembred thynges that ben knowen to alle folk. And of the felonies and fraudes of thyn accusours, it semeth the have touched it for sothe ryghtfully and schortly, al myghten tho same thynges betere and more plenteuously ben couth in the mouth of the peple that knoweth all this. [210] Thou hast eek blamed gretly and compleyned of the wrongful dede of the senat, and thou hast sorwyd for my blame, and thou hast wepen for the damage of thi renoun that is apayred; and thi laste sorwe eschaufede ayens fortune and compleyndest that guerdouns ne ben nat eveneliche yolden to the dessertes of folk. And in the lattre cende of thy wode muse, thou preydest that thilke pees that governeth the hevene schulde governe the erthe.

But for that many tribulacions of affecciouns han assailed the, and sorwe and ire and wepyng to-drawen the diversely, as thou art now feble of thought, myghtyere remedies ne schullen noght yit touchen the. For wyche we wol usen somdel lyghtere medicynes, so that thilke passiouns that ben waxen hard in swellynge by perturbaciouns flowynge in to thy thought, mowen waxen esy and softe to resceyven the

208. *dessertes*, etc., 'de tuis in commune bonum meritis.'

211. *compleyndest*, subject omitted as often; cp. 49, '*beieeth*.'

strengthe of a more myghty and more egre medycyne, by an esyere touchynge. [215]

'*Cum Phebi radiis grave Cancri sidus inestuat.*'—Metrum 6

Whan that the hevy sterre of the Cancre eschaufeth by the bemes of Phebus (that is to seyn, whan that Phebus the sonne is in the sygne of the Cancre), who-so yeveth thanne largely his seedes to the feeldes that refusen to resceyven hem, lat hym gon, be-giled of trust that he hadde to his corn, to accornes of okes. Yif thou wolt gadere vyolletes, ne go thou nat to the purple wode whan the feeld, chirkyng, agryseth of cold by the felnesse of the wind that hyghte Aquilon. Yif thou desirest or wolt usen grapes, ne seek thou nat with a glotonous hand to streyne and presse the stalkes of the vyne in the first somer sesoun; for Bachus, the god of wyn, hath rather yyven his yiftes to autumpne (the latter end of somer). God tokneth and assigneth the tymes, ablyng him to hir propre office, ne he ne suffreth nat the stowndes whiche that hym-self hath devyded and constreyned to ben I-medled to-gidre. [220] And for-ty he that forleteth certein ordenaunce of doynge by overthrowynge wey, he hath no glad issue or ende of his werkes.

'*Primum igitur paterisne me pauculis rogacionibus.*'—Prosa 6

First wiltow suffre me to touche and assaye the staat of thi thought by a fewe demaundes, so that I may understande what be the manere of thi curacioun?

'Axe me,' quod I, 'at thi wille what thou wolt, and I schal answer.' Tho seyde sche thus: 'Whether wenestow,' quod sche, 'that this world be governed by foolyssche happes and fortunows, or elles wenestow that ther be inne it only gouvernement of resoun?'

216. *hevy sterre*, 'grave Cancri sidus.'

221. *by overthrowynge wey*, 'præcipiti via.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I ne trowe nat i no manere that so certeyn thyngesschulde be moeved by fortunows [folie]; [225] bu I woot wel that god, makere and maister is governour of his werk, ne nevere na yit day that myghte putte me out of th sothnesse of that sentence.'

'So it is,' quod sche, 'for the same thyng songe thow a litil here by-forn, and by-wayledest and by-weptest, that oonly men weren put out of the cure of god; for of alle othere thynges thou ne doutedest the nat that they nere governed by resoun. But owgh I wondre gretly, certes, whi that thou art sik, syn that thou art put in so holsome a sentence: but lat us seken deppere; I coniecte that ther lakketh y not what. But sey me this: syn that thou ne doutest noght that this world be governed by god, with whiche governayles takestow heede that it is governed?'

'Umethes,' quod I, 'knowe I the sentence of thy questioun, so that I ne may nat yit answeren to thy demaundes.' [230]

'I nas nat desseyved,' quod sche, 'that ther ne faileth som-what, by whiche the maladye of perturbacion is crept in to thi thought, so as [thorw] the strengthe of the palsy chynynge [and] open. But sey me this: remembrestow what is the ende of thynges, and whider that the entencion of alle kende tendeth?'

'I have herd tolde it som-tyme,' quod I, 'but dryrenesse hath dulled my memorie.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'thou wost wel whennes that alle thynges bien comen and proceded?'

'I woot wel,' quod I, and answerede that god is bygynnyng of al. [235]

225. Instead of *folie* all MSS. read *fortune*. But Lat. 'fortuita temeritate' and Fr. 'fortunele folie' point to *folie* as the word Chaucer used.

228. *ough*, 'papae.'

229. *y not what*, 'nescio quid'; L. 'ie ne sce quoi.'

231. *so as*, etc., 'velut hianti valli robore'; the MSS. omit *thorw* and read *is open* instead of *and open*. The correction, justified by the Lat. and Fr. versions, is necessary to the sense.

'And how may this be,' quod sche, 'that, syn thou knowest the bygynnyng of thynges, that thou ne knowest nat what is the eende of thynges? But swiche ben the customes of perturbaciouns, and this power they han, that they mai moeve a man from his place (that is to seyn, fro the stabelnesse and perfeccion of his knowynge); but certes, thei mai nat al arrace hym, ne aliene hym in al. But I wolde that thou woldest answer to this: Remembrestow that thou art a man?'

'Whi schulde I nat remembren that?' quod I.

'Maystow noght telle me thanne,' quod sche, 'what thyng is a man?'

'Axestow me nat,' quod I, 'whethir that I be a resonable mortel beste? I woot wel, and I confesse wel that I am it.' [240]

'Wystestow nevere yit that thou were any othir thyng?' quod sche.

'No,' quod I.

'Now woot I,' quod sche, 'other cause of thi maladye, and that ryght greet: thou hast left for-to knownen thy-selve what thou art. Thurw whiche I have playnly fownde the cause of thi maladye, or elles the entree of recoveryng of thyn hele. For-why, for thou art confunded with foryetyng of thi-self, for-thi sorwestow that thou art exiled fro thy propre goodes; and for thou ne woost what is the eende of thynges, for-thy demestow that felouns and wikkide men ben myghty and weleful; [245] and for thou hast foryeten by whiche governementes the weild is governed, for-thy weenestow that these mutacions of fortunes fleten withouten governour. These ben grete causes, noght only to maladye, but certes gret causes to deth. But I thanke the auctour and the makere of hele, that nature hath nat al forleten the.

243. *Thurw whiche*, etc., 'quare plenissime . . . inveni'; Ft. 'par quoy (for *pourquoi*) ie ai plainement (i.e. *pleinement*, mistaken by Chaucer for O.F. *plainement*, ouvertement) trouvee', etc.

246. *fortunes*, 'fortunarum'; found only in C₁ Cx.; others *fortune*.

I have gret norysynge of thy hele, and that is, the sothe sentence of governance of the world, that thou by-levest that the governynge of it is nat subgit ne underput to the folye of these happes aventurous, but to the resoun of god. And ther-fore doute the nothing, for of this litel spark thine heet of lijf schal shine.

But for as moche as it is nat tyme yet of fastere remedies, and the nature of thoughtes deceyved is this, that, as ofte as they casten away sothe opynyouns, they clothen hem in false opynyouns, [250] of the whiche false opynyouns the derkenesse of perturbacion waxeth up, that confowndeth the verray insyghte—that derkenesse schal I assaie som-what to maken thynne and wayk by lyghte and meneliche remedies; so that, after that the derkenesse of deceyvynge desyrynges is doon away, thou mowe knowe the schynyng of verraye light.

'*Nubibus atris condita.*'—Metrum 7

The sterres, covred with blake cloudes, ne mowen yeten a-doun no lyght. Yif the truble wynd that hyghte Auster, turnynge and wallwynge the see, medleth the heete (that is to seyn, the boyl-ynge up fro the botme), the waves, that whilom weren clere as glas and lyk to the fayre bryghte dayes, withtand anon the syghtes of men by the filthe and ordure that is resolved. [255] And the fletynge stream, that royleth doun diversely fro heye montaynes, is arested and resisted ofte tyme by the encountryng of a stoon that is departed and fallen fro some roche. And for-thy, yif thou wolt loken and demen soth with cleer lyght, and hoolden the weye with a ryght path, weyve thou joie, dryf fro the drede, flemeth thou hope, ne lat no sorwe aproche (that is to seyn, lat non of these passiouns overcomen the or blenden the). For

248. *norysynge*, 'fomentum'; found only in Cx.; B *trust*; others *norysynges*.

251. Before that *derkenesse* all MSS. insert *and*.

257. C₂ A₁ Hn. *these fourc passiouns*.

cloudy and derk is thilke thoght, and bownde with bridelis, where as thise thynges reigenen.'

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS

'*Postea paulisper contineuit.*'—Prosa 1

After this sche stynte a lytel; and after that sche hadde gadrede by atempre stillennesse myn attencioun (as who so myghte seyn thus: after thise thynges sche stynte a litil, and whan sche aperceyved by atempre stillennesse that I was ententyf to herkne hire), sche bygan to speke on this wyse: 'If I,' quod sche, 'have undirstonden and knowen outrely the causes and the habyt of thy maladye, thow languyssest and art desfeted for desir and talent of thi rather fortune. [260] Sche (that ilke Fortune) oonly, that is chaunged, as thow feynest, to the ward, hath perverted the cleernesse and the estat of thi corage. I undeistonde the fele folde colours and desceytes of thilke merveyulous monstre (Fortune) and how sche useth ful flaterynge famylarite with hem that sche enforceth to bygyle, so longe, til that sche confounde with unsuffrable sorwe hem that sche hath left in despcir unpurveid. And yif thou remembrest wel the kynde, the maneris, and the desserte of thilke fortune, thou shalt wel knowe that, as in hir, thow nevere ne haddest ne hast ylost any fair thyng. But, as I trowe, I schal nat greetly travaillen to don the remembrement on these thynges. [265] For thow were wont to hurtlen hir with manly woordes whan sche was blaundyssching and present, and pursuydest hir with sentences that weren drawn out of myn entre (that is to seyn, of myn enformacion).

264. *as in hir*, i.e. as far as she is concerned.

266. C₃ Hn. Cx. *hurtelen* and *despysen*; Lat. 'incessere'; Fr. 'assaillir'.

267. *entre*, cp. Aq., 'aditu id est de nostra informatione.' The received text has simply *adyto*.

But no sodeyn mutacioun ne bytideth noght with-outen a manere chaungynge of corages; and so is it by-fallen that thou art a litil departed fro the pees of thi thought.

But now is tyme that thou drynke and a-taste some softe and delitable thynges, so that whanne thei ben entred with-ynne the, it mowen maken wey to strengere drynkes of medycines. Com now forth, therefore, the suasyoun of swetnesse rethorien, whiche that goht oonly the righte wey while sche forsaketh nat myn estatutes. And with Rethorice com forth Musice, a damoysele of our hous, that syngeth now lightere moedes or prolacions, now hevvere. [270] What eyleth the, man? What is it that hath cast the in-to moornyng and in-to wepyng? I trow that thou hast seyn some newe thyng and unkouth. Thou wenest that fortune be chaunged ayens the; but thow wenest wrong, yif thou that wene: alway tho ben hir maneris. Sche hath rather kept, as to the ward, hir propre stablenesse in the chaungynge of hir-self. Ryght swiche was sche whan sche flateryd the and desceyved the with unlesful lykynges of false welefulnesse. Thou hast now knowen and ateynt the doutous or double visage of thilke blynde goddesse (Fortune). [275] Sche, that yit covereth and wympeth hir to other folk, hath schewyd hir every del to the. Yif thou approvest here and thynkest that sche is good, use hir maneris and pleyne the nat; and yif thou agrisest hir false trecherie, despise and cast away hir that pleyeth so harmfully. For sche, that is now cause of so mochel sorwe to the, scholde ben cause to the of pees and of joye. Sche hath forsaken the, forsothe, the whiche that nevere man mai ben siker that sche ne schal forsaken hym. (Glose. But natheles some bookes han the texte thus: for-

270. *modes* or *prolacions*, 'modos'; but probably due to some gloss.

277. *use hir maneris*, 'utere moribus'.

280. *some bookes*, i.e. the French text.

sothe sche hath forsaken the, ne ther nys no man siker that sche hath nat forsake.)

[280] Holdestow thanne thilke wefulnesse precious to the, that schal passen? And is present Fortune dere-worth to the, whiche that nys nat feithful for to duelle, and whan sche goth away that sche bryngeth a wyght in sorwe? For syn sche may nat ben with-holden at a mannys wille, sche maketh hym a wrecche when sche departeth fro hym. What other thyng is flyttinge Fortune but a maner schewyng of wrecchidnesse that is to comen? Ne it suffiseth nat oonly to loken on thyng that is present byforn the eien of a man; but wisdom loketh and mesureth the ende of thynges. And the same chaungynge from oon in-to another (that is to seyn, fro adversite in-to prosperite), maketh that the manaces of Fortune ne ben nat for to dreden, ne the flaterynge of hir to ben desired. Thus, at the laste, it byhoveth the to suffren wyth evene wil in pacience al that is doon in-with the floor of Fortune (that is to seyn, in this world), syn thou hast oony put thy nekke undir the yok of hir. [285]

or yif thou wilt writen a lawe of wendinge and of duellynge to Fortune, whiche that thou hast chosen frely to ben thi lady, artow nat wrongful in that, and makest Fortune wroth and aspre by thyn impacience? And yit thou mayst nat chaungen hir. Yif thou committest and be-takest thi seyles to the wynd, thou shalt ben shoven, nat thider that thou woldest, but whider that the wynd shoueveth the. Yif thou castest thi seedes in feeldes, thou sholdest han in mynde that the yeres ben amonges outhere-while plentevous and outhere-while bareyne. Thou hast by-taken thiself to the governaunce of Fortune and for-thi it byhoveth the to ben obeisaunt to the maneris of thi lady. Enforcestow the to aresten or withholden the swyftnesse and the sweighe of hir turnynge wheel? O thou fool of alle mortel foolis! Yif Fortune bygan to duelle stable, she cesseded thanne to ben Fortune. [290]

'*Hec cum superba.*'—Metrum 1

Whan Fortune with a proud ryght hand hath turned hir chaungynge stowndes, sche fareth lyke the maneris of the boylunge Eurippe. (Glosa. Eurippe is an arm of the see that ebbeth and floweth, and som-tyme the stream is on o side, and som-tyme on the tothir.) Textus. She cruel (Fortune) casteth adoun kyages that whilom weren y-dradd; and sche, desceyvable, enhaunceth up the humble chere of hym that is discountifed. Ne sche neither heereth, ne rekketh of wrecchide wepynges; and she is so hard that sche leygheth and scorneth the wepynges of hem, the whiche sche hath makid wepe with hir free wille. Thus sche pleyeth, and thus sche proveeth hir strengthes, and scheweth a greet wonder to alle hir servauntes yif that a wyght is seyn weful and overthrowe in an houre. [295]

'*Vellem autem pauca.*'—Prosa 2

Certes I wolde pleten with the a fewe thynges, usynge the woordes of Fortune. Take hede now thy-selve, yif that sche asketh ryght: "(O thou man, wherfore makestow me gylty by thyne every dayes pleynges? What wrong have I don the? What godes have I byrest the that weren thyne?" Stryf or plect with me byforn what juge that thou wolt of the possessioun of rychesses or of dignytees; and yif thou maist schewen me that ever any mortel man hath resceyved oony of tho thynges to ben hise in propre, thanne wil I graunte freely that thilke thynges weren thine whiche that thou axest.

Whan that nature brought the forth out of thi modir wombe, I resceyved the nakid and nedy of alle thynges, and I norissched the with my richesses, and was redy and ententyf thurwe my favour

295. *in an houre*, i.e. in one hour.

296. *asketh ryght*, 'ius postulet.'

297. C₁ Cx. A₂ read *gydtyf*.

299. *ever goes with any*, 'cuiusquam.'

to sustene the [300]—and that maketh the now incipient ayens me; and I envyrourde the with al the habundaunce and schynynge of alle goodes that ben in my ryght. Now it liketh me to withdrawe myn hand. Thow hast had grace as he that hath used of foreyne goodes; Richesses, honours, and swiche othere thinges ben of my right. My servauntes knowen me for hir lady; they comen with me, and departen whan I wende. I dar wel affermen hardely that, yif tho thynges of whiche thou pleyneest that thou hast for-lorn [hem] hadden ben thyne, thou ne haddest nat lorn hem. Schal I thanne, oonly, be defended to use my ryght? Certes it is leueful to the hevene to maken clere dayes, and after that to coveren the same dayes with dirke nyghtes. [305] The yeer hath eek leve to apparaylen the visage of the erthe, now with floures, and now with fruyt, and to confownden hem som-tyme with reynes and with coldes. The see hath eek his ryght to ben som-tyme calm and blaudyschyng with smothe watir, and som-tyme to ben horrible with wawes and with tempestes. But the covetise of men, that mai nat be stawnched,—schal it bynde me to ben stidfast, syn that stidfastnesse is uncouth to my maneris? Swiche is my strengthe, and this pley I pleye continually. I torne the whirlynge wheel with the turnynge sercle; I am glad to chaungen the loweste to the heyeste, and the heyeste to the loweste. Worth up yif thou wolt, so it be by this lawe, that thou ne holde nat that I do the wrong, though thou descende a-down whan the resoun of my pley axeth it. [310] [Wystestow nat thanne my maneris?] Wystestow nat how Cresus, kyng of Lydens, of whiche kyng Cirus was ful

304. *hem*, supplied from Fr. B omits *of*, and for *that thou hast reads to have*.

311. *Wystestow*, etc. Supplied from Lat. and Fr.; probably omitted by Adam Scrivener.

sore agast a lytil byforn,—that this rewliche Cresus was caught of Cirus and lad to the fyre to ben brend; but that a rayn descended down fro hevene that rescowde hym. And is it out of thy mynde how that Paulus, consul of Rome, whan he had taken the kyng of Percyens, weep pitously for the captivite of the selve kyng. What other thyng by-waylen the crynges of tragedyes but oonly the dedes of fortune, that with unwar strook overturneth the realmes of greet nobleye? (Glose. Tragedye is to seyn a dite of a prosperite for a tyme, that endeth in wrecchidnesse.) Textus. [315] Leredest nat thou in Greek whan thou were yong, that in the entre or in the seler of Juppiter ther ben cowched two tonnes; the toon is ful of good, and the tother is ful of harm. What ryght hastow to pleyne, yif thou hast taken more plenteuously of the gode side (that is to seyn of my riches and prosperites)? And what ek yif y ne be nat al departed fro the? What eek yif my mutabilite yeveth the ryghtful cause of hope to han yit bettere thynges? Natheles dismaye the nat in thi thought; and thou that art put in the comune realme of alle, desire nat to lyven by thyn oonly propre ryght.

‘*Si quantas rapidis.*’—Metrum 2

Though Plente (that is, goddess of rychesses) hielde a-down with ful horn, and withdraweth nat hir hand, as many riches as the see torneth upward sandes whan it is moeved with ravysshyng blastes, [320] or elles as manye rychesses as ther schynen bryghte sterres in hevene on the sterry nyghtes; yit for all that mankynde nolde nat cese to wepe wrecchide pleyntes. And al be it so that god resceyveth gladly hir priers,

313. *kyng of Percy* ‘*regis Persi*’; but Fr.

316. *seler*, possibly Fr. ‘*sueil*’.

319. *desire nat*, ‘*desideres vivere*’; but cp. variant in Notker, ‘*ne desideres v.*’

and yveth hem, as fool large, moche gold, and apparayleth coveytous folk with noble or cleer honours; yit semeth hem haven I-geeten no thyng, but alwey hir cruel ravyne, devourynge al that they han geten, scheweth othere gapynge (that is to seyn, gapyn and desiren yit after mo rychesses). What byddes myghte withholden to any certeyn ende the disordene covetise of men, whan evere the rather that it fletith in large yiftes, the more ay brenneth in hem the thurst of havynge? Certes he that qwakynge and dredful weneth hym-selven neddy, he ne lyveth never-mo ryche." [325]

'*Hiis igitur si pro se.*'—Prosa 3

Therefore, yif that fortune spake with the for hir-self in this manere, for-sothe thow ne haddest noght what thou myghtest answer. And yif thow hast any thyng wher-with thow mayst rightfully defenden thi compleynte, it behoveth the to schewen it, and I wol yve the space to tellen it.

'Certeynly,' quod I thanne, 'thise ben faire thynges and enoynted with hony swetnesse of Rethorik and Musike; and oonly whil thei ben herd thei ben delicious, but to wrecches it is a deppere felyng of harm. (This is to seyn, that wrecches felen the harmes that thei suffren more grevously than the remedies or the delices of thise wordes mowen gladen or conforten him.) So that, whanne thise thynges stynten for to soun in eris, the sorwe that is in-set greveth the thought.' [330]

'Right so it is,' quod sche. 'For thise ben yit none remedies of thy maladye, but they ben a maner norisschynges of thi sorwe, yit rebel ayen thi curacioun. For whan that tyme is, I schal move and adjust swiche thynges

that percen hem-selve depe. But natheles that thow schalt noght wilne to leten thi-self a wrecche, hastow foryeten the nowmbre and the maner of thi welefulnesse? I holde me stille how that the sovereyn men of the city token the in cure and in kepyng, whan thow were orphelyn of fader and of modir, and were chose in affynite of prynces of the cite; and thow by-gonne rather to ben leef and deere than for to been a neyghelbour, the whiche thyng is the moste precyous kinde of any propinquyte or alliaunce that mai ben. [335] Who is it that ne seide tho that thow neere right weleful, with so gret a nobleye of thi fadres-in-lawe, and with the chastete of thy wyf, and with the oportunyte and noblesse of thyne masculyn children (that is to seyn, thy sones)? And over al this—me list to passen of comune thynges—how thow haddest in thy youthe dignytes that weren wernd to oolde men. But it deliteth me to comen now to the synguler uphpepyng of thi welefulnesse. Yif any fruyt of mortel thynges mai han any weyghte or pris of welefulnesse, myghtestow evere forgeten, for any charge of harm that myghte byfalle, the remembraunce of thilke day that thow seye thi two sones maked conseiloris, and I-ladde to-gidre fro thyn hous under so greet assemble of senatours and under the blithnesse of peple; [340] and whan thow saye hem set in the court in hir chayeres of dignytes? Thow, rethorien or pronouncere of kynges preysynges, desservedst glorie of wit and of eloquence when thow, syttyng bytwixen thi two sones conscyllers, in the place that highte Circo, fulfildest the abydyng of the multitude of peple that was sprad abouten the with so large preysynge and laude as men syngen in victories. Tho yave

336. *neere*, C₂ *were*.

336. *fadres-in-lawe*, 'socerorum.'

337. *over al this*, etc., 'Prætereo (libet enim præterire communia) sumptas,' etc., misread as 'Præterea (libet præterire),' etc., so that *how* depends on *I holde me stille* in 334.

340. *under*, 'sub frequentia,' etc.

343. MSS. *and fulfildest*.

323. *scheweth*, etc., 'pandit i.e. manifestat alios hiatus.'

328. *it is*, i.e. there is. C₂ Hn. A₁ A₂ H omit it.

332. C₂ Hn. A₁ C₁ omit *and adjust*; B *and aijuse*; Fr. 'aiusteraî.

thow woordes to Fortune, as I trowe, (that is to seyn, tho feddestow fortune with glosynge wordes and desceyvedest hir) whan sche accoyede the and norryside the as hir owne delices. Thow bare away of Fortune a yifte (that is to seye swich guerdoun) that sche nevere yaf to prive man. [345] Wiltow therfore leye a reknyng with Fortune? Sche hath now twynkled first upon the with a wikkid eye. If thow considere the nowmbre and the maner of thy blisses and of thy sorwes, thou mayst noght forsaken that thow nart yit blisful. For yif thou therfore wenest thi-self nat weleful, for thynges that tho semeden joyeful ben passed, ther nys nat why thow sholdest wene thi-self a wrecche; for thynges that semen now sory passen also. Artow now comen first, a sodeyn gest, into the schadowe or tabernacle of this lif? Or trowestow that any stedfastnesse be in mannes thynges, whan ofte a swyft hour dissolveth the same man (that is to seyn, whan the soule departeth fro the body). [350] For al though that selde is ther any feith that fortunes thynges wollen dwellen, yet natheles the laste day of a mannes lif is a maner deth to fortune, and also to thilke that hath dwelt. And therfore what wenestow thar rekke, yif thow forleete hir in deyinge, or elles that sche (Fortune) forleete the in fleyng away?

‘*Cum primo polo.*’—Metrum 3

Whan Phcebus (the sonne) bygynneth to spreden his clernesne with rosene chariettes, thanne the sterre, y-dymmed, paleth hir white cheeres by the flambes of the sonne that overcometh the sterre lyght. (This to scyn, whan the sonne is

344. *as hir owne delices*, ‘ut suas delicias’ (as her darling).

349. *schadowe or tabernacle*, ‘in . . . scenam’; Fr. ‘en la cortine et en l’ombre.’ But ‘tabernaculum’ and ‘umbra’ are common mediæval glosses of ‘scena.’

352. *thar rekke* (A *thar*, B *ther*, others *dar*. Perhaps read *the* before *thar*, cp. 1) 329, Boece 1001, i.e. What do you think you need care, etc.

rysen, the day-sterre waxeth pale, and leeseth hir lyght for the grete bryghtnesse of the sonne.) Whan the wode waxeth rody of rosene floures in the fyrst somer sesoun thurw the breeth of the wynd Zephirus that waxeth warm, yif the cloudy wynd Auster blowe felliche, than goth away the fairnesse of thornes. [355] Ofte the see is cleer and calm without moevyng flodes, and ofte the horrible wynd Aquylon moeveth boylyng tempestes, and overhelveth the sec. Yif the forme of this world is so seeld stable, and yif it torneth by so manye entrechaungynges, wiltow thanne trusten in the tumblyng fortunes of men? Wiltow trowen on flyttinge goodes? It is certeyn and establissched by lawe perdurable, that nothyng that is engendred nys stedfast ne stable.’

‘*Tum ego vera inquam.*’—Prosa 4

Thanne seide I thus: ‘O norice of alle vertues, thou seist ful sooth; ne I mai noght forsake the ryght swyfte cours of my prosperite (that is to seyn, that prosperite ne be comen to me wonder swyftli and sone); but this is a thyng that greetly smerteth me whan it remembreth me. [360] For in alle adversites of fortune the moost unseely kynde of contrarious fortune is to han ben weleful.’

‘But that thow,’ quod sche, ‘abyest thus the torment of thi false opynioun, that maistow nat ryghtfully blamen ne arreten to thynges. (As who seith, for thow hast yit manye habundances of thynges.) Textus. For al be it so that the ydel name of aventurous welefulnesse moeveth the now, it is leveful that thow rekne with me of how many grete thynges thow hast yit plente. And therfore yif that thilke thyng that thow haddest for moost precyous in al thy rychesse of fortune be kept to the yit by the grace of god unwemmed and undefouled, [365] maistow thanne pleynge ryghtfully upon

364. *grete*, found only in C₂ Hn.

the mescheef of fortune, syn thou hast yit thi beste thynges? Certes yit lyveth in good poynt thilke precyous honour of mankynde, Symacus, thi wyves fader, whiche that is a man maked al of sapience and of vertu, the whiche man thou woldest byen redly with the pris of thyn owene lif. He bywayleth the wronges that men don to the, and nat for hym-self; for he lyveth in sikernesse of anye sentences put ayens hym. And yit lyveth thi wyf, that is a-tempre of wyt and passynge othere wommen in clenness of chastete; and, for I wol closen shortly hir bountes, sche is lyk to hir fadir. I telle the wel that sche lyveth, loth of this lyf, and kepeth to the oonly hir goost, and is al maat and overcomen by wepyng and sorwe for desir of the; [370] in the whiche thyng oonly I moot graunten that thi welefulnesse is amenused. What schal I seyn cek of thi two sones conseyllours, of whiche, as of children of hir age, ther shyneth the liknesse of the wit of hir fadir or of hir eldefader! And syn the sovereyne cure of al mortel folk is to saven hir owene lyves, O how weleful artow, if thou knowe thy goodes! For yit ben ther thynges dwelled to the ward that no man douteth that they ne be more derwithe to the than thyn owene lif. And for-thy drye thi teeris, for yit nys nat every fortune al hateful to the ward, ne over greet tempest hath nat fallen upon the, [375] whan that thyne ances clyven faste, that neither wolen suffren the counfort of this tyme present ne the hope of tyme comyng to passen ne to faylen.'

'And I prcie,' quod I, 'that faste mote thei halden; for, whiles that thei halden, how so ever that thynges been. I shal wel flectyn forth and escapyn; but thou mayst wel seen how grete apparaues and array that me lakketh, that ben passed away fro me.'

'I have somewhat avaunced and for

372. *of whiche*, i.e. in whom, 'es quieux.'
373. *ben dwelled*, have remained; A₁ *ben dwellyng*.

thred the,' quod sche, 'yif that thou anoye nat, ne forthynke nat of al thy fortune. (As who seith, I have som-what comforted the, so that thou tempeste the nat thus with al thy fortune, syn thou hast yit thy beste thynges.) [380] But I mai nat suffren thi delices, that pleynest so wepyng and angwysschous for that ther lakketh som-what to thy welefulnesse. For what man is so sad or of so parfite welefulnesse, that he ne stryvethe or pleyneth on some halfe ayen the qualite of his estat? For-why ful anguysschous thing is the condicioun of mannes goodes; for cyther it cometh nat altogidre to a wyght, or elles it ne last nat perpetuel. For som man hath gret rychesse, but he is aschamed of his ungentil lynage; and som man is renomyd of noblesse of kynrede, but he is enclosed in so greet angwyssche of nede of thynges that hym were levere that he were unknowe; and som man haboundeth bothe in rychesse and noblesse, but yit he bewayleth his chaste lyf, for he ne hath no wyf; [385] and som man is wel and selyly y-mariet, but he hath no children, and norissbeth his rychesses to the cyres of straunge folk; and som man is gladed with children, but he wepeth ful sory for the trespas of his sone or of his daughter. And for this ther ne accordeth no wyght lyghtly to the condicioun of his fortune; for alwey to every man ther is in som-what that, unassayed, he woot nat, or elles he dredeth that he hath assaied. And adde this also, that every weleful man hath a ful delicat feelynge; so that, but yif alle thynges byfalle at his owene wil, for he [is] incipient or is nat used to have noon adversite, anon he is throwen adoun for every litil thyng. [390] And ful litel thynges ben tho that withdrawn the somme or the perfeccioun

381. *delices*, 'delicias tuas,' effeminacy; cp. 144.

384. *angwyssche of nede*, etc., 'angustia rei familiaris'; Fr. 'angoisse de povrete.'

389. *ther is in* (B *ther is in hym*, A *ther is inmost*), i.e. something is therein that, etc.

390. *is incipient*, 'is' is found only in Cx. A₂.

of blisfulnesse fro hem that been most fortunat. How manye men trowestow wolde demen himself to ben almoste in hevене, yif thei myghten atayne to the leste partye of the remenaunt of thi fortune? This same place that thow clepest exil is contre to hem that enhabiten here, and forthi no-thing wrecchide but whan thou wenest it. (As who seith, thow thi-self, ne no wyght ellis, nis a wrecche but whanne he weneth hym self a wrech by reputation of his corage.) And ayenward, alle fortune is blisful to a man by the aggregable or by the egalyte of hym that suffreth it. [395] What man is that that is so weleful that nolde change his estat whan he hath lost pacience? The swetnesse of mannes welefulnesse is spraynd with many bitter-nesses; the whiche welefulnesse although it seme swete and joieful to hym that useth it, yit mai it nat ben withholden that it ne goth away whan it wole. Thanne is it wele seene how wrecchid is the blisfulnesse of mortel thynges, that neyther it dureth perpetuel with hem that every fortune resceyven agreably or egaly, ne it deliteth nat in al to hem that ben angwyssous.

O ye mortel folk, what seeke ye thanne blisfulnesse out of your-self whiche that is put in your-self? Errour and folic confoundeth yow. I schal schewe the shortly the poynt of soverayn blisfulnesse. Is there any thyng more precyous to the than thi-self? [400] Thow wolt answer, "nay." Thanne, yif it so be that thow art myghty over thyself (that is to seyn, by tranquillite of thi soule), than hastow thyng in thi powere that thow noldest nevere leesen, ne fortune may nat bynymen it the. And that thow mayst knowe that blisfulnesse ne mai nat standen in thynges that ben fortunous and temporel, now undirstond and gadere it togidre thus: yif blisfulnesse be the soverayn

good of nature that lyveth by resoun, ne thilke thyng nys nat soverayn good that may ben taken away in any wise (for more worthy thyng and more dygne is thilke thyng that mai nat ben take away); than scheweth it wel that the unstablenesse of fortune may nat atayne to receyven verray blisfulnesse. [405] And yit more over, what man that this towmblynge welefulnesse ledeth, eyther he woot that it is chaungeable, or eller he woot it nat. And yif he woot it nat, what blisful fortune may ther ben in the blyndnesse of ignoraunce? And yif he woot that it is chaungeable, he mot alwey ben adrad that he ne lese that thyng that he ne douteth nat but that he may lese it (as who seith he mot bien alwey agast lest he lese that he woot wel he may lese it); for whiche the contynuel drede that he hath, ne suffreth hym nat to ben weleful, or elles yif he lese it, he weneth to ben despised and forleten. Certes eek that is a ful litel good that is born with evene herte whan it is lost (that is to seyn that men do no more force of the lost than of the havynge). [410] And for as moche as thow thi-self art he to whom it hath be schewed and proved by ful many demon-stracyons, as I woot wele, that the soules of men ne mowen nat deyne in no wyse; and ek syn it is cleer and certeyne that fortunous welefulnesse endeth by the deth of the body; it mai nat be douteth that, yif that deth may take away blisfulnesse, that al the kynde of mortel thynges ne descendeth into wrecchidnesse by the ende of the deth. And syn we knowe wel that many a man hath sought the fruyt of blysfulnesse, nat oonly with suffrynge of deeth, but cek with suffrynge of peynes and tormentes, how myghte thanne this present lif make men blisful, syn that whanne thilke selve lif is ended it ne maketh folk no wrechches? [415]

393. *and forthi*, etc., should be *and forthi nothyng is wrecched*, etc. But some Latin texts read 'nihil miserum' for 'nihil est miserum.'

395. *by the aggregable*, etc., according to the equanimity with which one takes it.

406. *ledeth*, 'vehit.'

410. *lost*, i.e. loss.

413. *at the kynde*, etc., mistranslation of 'omne mortalium genus.'

'*Quisquis volet perhennem cautus.*'—

Metrum 4

What maner man stable and war, that wol fownden hym a perdurable seete, and ne wol noght ben cast down with the lowde blastes of the wynd Eurus, and wole despice the see manasyng with flodes; lat hym eschuwen to bilde on the cop of the mountaigne, or in the moyste sandes; for the felle wynd Auster tormenteth the cop of the mountaigne with alle hise strengthes, and the lause sandes refusen to beren the hevy weyghte. And for-thi, yif thou wolt fleen the perilous aventure (that is to seyn, of the world) have mynde certeynly to fycchen thin hous of a myric site in a low stoon. For al-though the wynd troublunge the see thondre with overthrownges, thou, that art put in quite and weleful by strengthe of thi palays, schalt leden a cler age, scornynge the woodnesses and the ires of the eyr. [420]

'*Set cum rationum iam in te.*'

Prosa 5

But for as mochel as the norisschynges of my resouns descenden now into the, I trowe it were tyme to usen a litel strengere medicynes. Now undirstand heere; al were it so that the yiftes of fortune ne were noght brutel ne transitorie, what is ther in hem that mai be thyn in any tyme, or elles that it nys fowl, yif that it be considered and lookyd perfytely? Richesses ben they precieuse by the nature of hem-self, or elles by the nature of the? What is most worth of rychesses? Is it nat gold or myght of money assembled? Certes thilke gold and thilke moneye schyneth and yeveth bettre renoun to hem that dispenden it than to thilke folk

419. *of a myric site* (C₁ H B cite, A₂ cytee, Hn. Cx. sete) should follow *aventure*, 'sortem sedis amonee'.

420. *a cler age*, 'duces serenun ævum,' misread as 'duces serenun ævum.'

422. *Now undirstand heere*, mistranslation of 'Or entens ici' (Lat. 'age').

that mokeren it; for avaryce maketh alwey mokereres to ben hated, and largesse maketh folk cleer of renoun. [425] For, syn that swiche thyng as is transferred fro o man to an othir ne may nat duellen with no man, certes thanne is thilke moneye precyous when it is translated into other folk and stynteth to ben had by usage of large yvyng of hym that hath yeven it. And also yif al the moneye that is over-al in the world were gadryd to-ward o man, it scholde make alle othere men to be nedý as of that. And certes a voys al hool (that is to seyn with-uten amenusynge) fulfilleth to-gydre the herynge of moche folk. But certes your rychesses ne mowen noght passen unto moche folk withouten amenusynge; and whan they ben apassed, nedes they maken hem pore that forgoon tho rychesses. O streyte and nedý clepe I this richesse, syn that many folk mai nat han it al, ne al mai nat comen to o man without pouert of alle othere folke. [430] And the schynynge of gemmes, that I clepe precyous stones, draweth it nat the eighen of folk to hem-ward (that is to seyn for the beautes)? But certes, yif ther were beaute or bountee in the schynynge of stones, thilke clernesse is of the stones hem-selve, and nat of men; for whiche I wondre gretly that men merveylen on swiche thynges. For-why what thyng is it that, yif it wanteth moevynge and joynture of soule and body, that by right myghte semen a fair creature to hym that hath a soule of resoun? For al be it so that gemmes drawn to hem-self a litel of the laste beaute of the world thurw the distinccioun of hem-self, yit, for as mochel as thei ben put under your excellence, thei ne han nat deserved by no way that ye schulde merveylen on hem. [435] And the beaute of feeldes, deliteth it nat mochel untoyou?

428. *a voys*, etc., 'vox quidem tota pariter multorum replet auditum.'

434. Chaucer means *moevyng of soule and joynture of body*. 'a fair creature,' etc., should be *fair to a creature that hath a soule and resoun*.

Boece. 'Why schulde it nat deliten us, syn that it is a ryght fayr porcioun of the ryght fair werk (that is to seyn, of this worlde)? And right so ben we gladed som-tyme of the face of the see whan it is cleer; and also mervylen we on the hevene, and on the sterres, and on the sonne, and on the moone.'

Philosophie. 'Aperteneth,' quod sche, 'any of thilke thynges to the? Why darstow glorifye the in the shynynge of any swiche thynges? Artow distyngwed and embelysed by the spryngynge floures of the first somer sesoun, or swelleth thi plente in suites of somer? Whi artow ravyssched with idel joies? Why embracest thou straunge goodes as they weren thyne? [440] Fortune schal nevere maken that swiche thynges ben thyne that nature of thynges hath makid foreyne fro the. Soth is that, withouten doute, the frutes of the erthe owen to be to the norrysynge of beestis; and yif thou wilt fulfille thyn nede after that it suffiseth to nature, thanne is it no nede that thou seke aftir the superfluyte of fortune. For with ful fewe thynges and with ful litel thynges nature halt hir apayed; and yif thou wolt a-choken the fulfyllynge of nature with superfluytees, certes thilke thynges that thou wolt thresten or powren in-to nature schulle ben unjoyeful to the, or elles anyous. Wenestow eek that it be a fair thyng to schyne with diverse clothynge? [445] Of whiche clothynge yif the beaute be aggregable to loken uppon, I wol mervylen on the nature of the matiere of thilke clothes, or elles on the werkman that wroughte hem. But also a long route of meyne, maketh that a blisful man? The whiche servantes yif thei ben vicyous of condyciouns, it is a gret charge and a destruccioun to the hous, and a gret enemy to the lord hym-self; and yif

445. *a-choken the fulfyllynge*, 'urgere satietatem.'

445. *to the should be to her.*

447. *vicyous of condyciouns*, 'vitiosi moribus.'

448. *a gret enemy*, 'formens anemie,' 'vehementer inimica'; *enemy* is here adj.

they ben gode men, how schal straunge or foreyne goodnesse ben put in the nowmber of thi richesces? So that by alle thise forseide thynges it es cleerly schewed, that nevere oon of thilke thynges that thou accountedest for thyne goodes nas nat thi good.

In the whiche thynges yif ther be no beaute to ben desired, why scholdestow ben sory yif thou leese hem, or whi scholdestow reioysen the for to holden hem? [450] For yif thei ben faire of hir owene kynde, what aperteneth that to the? For als so wel scholde they han ben fayre by hem-selve, though thei were departed fro alle thyne rychesses. For-why fair ne precyous were thei nat for that thei comen among thi rychesses; but for they semeden fair and precyous, therfore thou haddest leverer rekne hem among thi rychesses. But what desires-tow of fortune with so greet a noyse and with so greet a fare? I trowe thou seeke to dryve a-wey nede with habundaunce of thynges, but certes it turneth to you al in the contrarie. For-why certes it nedeth of ful manye helpynges to kepyn the diversite of precious ostelementes; and sooth it is that of many thynges han they nede, that many thynges han; and ayenward of litel nedeth hem that mesureth hir fille after the nede of kynde, and nat after the outrage of covetyse. [455] Is it thanne so, that ye men ne han no propre good I-set in you, for whiche ye mooten seke outward your goodes in foreyne and subgit thynges? So is thanne the condicion of thynges turned up so doun, that a man, that is a devyne beest be meryte of his resoun, thynketh that hym-self nys neyther fair ne noble but it be thuw possessioun of ostelementes that ne han no soules. And certes alle othere thynges ben apayed of hir owene beautes, but ye men that ben semblable to god by your resonable thought, desiren to apparailen your excellent kynde

456. *subgit*, 'sepositis,' probably misread as 'suppositis.'

453. *apayed of*, i.e. satisfied with.

of the loweste thynges; ne ye undir-standen nat how greet a wrong ye don to your creatour. For he wolde that mankynde were moost wurthy and noble of any othere erthly thynges, and ye thresten a-doun yowre dignytes bynethen the loweste thynges. [460] For yif that al the good of every thyng be more precyous than is thilke thyng whos that the good is, syn ye demen that the fowleste thynges ben your goodes, thanne submitten ye and putten your-selven undir the fouleste thynges by your estimacioun; and certes this betydeh nat withouten your desert. For certes swiche is the condicioun of alle mankynde, that only whan it hath knowynge of it-self, thanne passeth it in noblesse alle othere thynges; and whan it forletith the knowynge of it-self thanne it is brought by-nethen alle beestes. For-whi alle othere lyvyng beestes han of kynde to knowe nat hem-self; but whan that men leeten the knowynge of hem-self, it cometh hem of vice. But how broode scheweth the errour and the folie of yow men, that wenen that anythyng mai ben apparailled with straunge apparailementes! But for-sothe that mai nat be don. [465] For yif a wyght schyneth with thynges that ben put to hym (as thus, yif thilke thynges schynen with whiche a man is aparayled), certes thilke thynges ben comended and preysed with whiche he is apparayled; but natheles, the thyng that is covered and wrapped under that duelleth in his felthe.

And I denye that thilke thyng be good that anoyeth hym that hath it. Gabbé I of this? 'Thow wolt sey "nay." Certes rychesses han anoyed ful ofte hem that han tho rychesses, syn that every wikkid schrewe, and for his wikkidnesse is the

463. *han . . . to knowe*, 'ceteris animantibus natura est ignorare sese,' with 'natura' read as abl. *cometh hem*, 'leur vint'; cp. *Bk. of Du.*, 778.

470. *and for his wikkidnesse*, etc. (C1 Hn. A2 A1 omit is, B of *his wikkidnesse is the more*, etc., i.e. *is for his wikkidnesse the more*, etc.), i.e. even for his wickedness, etc.

more gredy afir othir folkes rychesses wher so evere it be in any place, be it gold or precyous stones; and weneth hym onoly most worthy that hatli hem. [470] Thow thanne, that so bysy dredest now the swerd and the spere, yif thou haddest entred in the path of this lif a voyde weyfarynge man, thanne woldestow syngen by-for the thief. (As who seith, a pore man that bereth no rychesse on hym by the weie may boldely synge byforn theves, for he hath nat where-of to be robbed.) O precyous and ryght cleer is the blisfulnesse of mortel rychesses, that, whan thou hast geten it, thanne hastow lorn thi sikernesse!

'*Felix nimium prior etas.*'—Metrum 5

Blisful was the firste age of men. They heelden hem apayed with the metes that the trewe fecldes broughten forth. They ne destroyeden ne desseyvede nat hem-self with outrage. They weren wont lyghtly to slaken hir hungir at even with accornes of ookes. [475] They ne coude nat medle the yift of Bachus to the cleer hony (that is to seyn, they coude make no pyment or clarree), ne they coude nat medle the bryghte fleeces of the contre of Seryens with the venym of Tyrie (this is to seyn, thei coude nat deyen white fleeces of Syrien contre with the blood of a maner schellefysche that men fynden in Tyrie, with whiche blood men deyen purple). They slepen holsome slepes uppon the gras, and dronken of the rennyng watres, and layen undir the schadwes of the heye pyn trees. Ne no gest ne straunger ne karf yit the heye see with oores or with schipes; ne thei ne hadden seyn yit none newe stroondes to leden marchandise into diverse contres. Tho weren the cruele clariouns ful hust and ful stille. Ne blood I-schad by egre hate ne hadde nat

474-484. Also translated in *The Former Age*.
476. *fleeces of the*, etc., 'velleria serum' (cp. Verg. *Georg.* ii. 121), 'les toisons des Sirians,' i.e. silks of Syria. *venym of Tyrie*, 'Tyrio veneno' (cp. *Georg.* ii. 465).

deyed yit armures. [480] For wher-to or which woodnesse of enemys wolde first moeven armes, whan the seyen cruele wounδες ne none medes be of blood I-shad. I wolde that our tymes sholde torne ayen to the oolde maneris! But the anguysschous love of havyng brenneth in folk more cruely than the fyre of the mountaigne of Ethna that ay brenneth. Allas! what was he that first dalf up the gobbettes or the weyghtes of gold covered undir erthe and the precyous stones that wolden han be hydd? He dalf up precyous periles. (That is to seyn, that he that hem first up dalf, he dalf up a precyous peril for-why, for the precyousnesse of swich thyng hath many man ben in peril.)

'*Quid autem de dignitatibus.*'—Prosa 6

But what schal I seye of dignytes and of powers, the whiche ye men, that neither knowen verray dignyte ne verray powere, areysen hem as heyghe as the hevene? [485] The whiche dignytees and powyeres yif thei comen to any wikkid man, thei doon as greet damages and destrucciouns as doothe the flaumbe of the mountaigne Ethna whan the flaumbe walweth up, ne no deluge ne doth so cruele harmes. Certes the remembreth wel, as I trowe, that thilke dignyte that men clepyn the Imperie of consulers, the whiche that whilom was begynnynge of fredom, yowr eldren covyeteden to han don away that dignyte for the pride of the consulers. And ryght for the same pride yowr eldres by-forn that tyme hadden doon away out of the cite of Rome the kynges name (that is to seyn, thei nolden han no lengere no kyng).

But now, if it so be that dignytees and poweris ben yyven to gode men, the whiche thyng is ful selde, what aggreable thynges is ther in the dignytees or powyres but oonly the goodnessse of folk that usen hem? And therefore it is thus that honour ne cometh nat to vertu for

485. *doon* to 547, *preysynge*, missing from Hn.

cause of dignyte, but, ayenward, honour cometh to dygnite for cause of vertu. [490] But whiche is thilke your derworthe power that is so cleer and so requerable? O ye erthliche bestes considere ye nat over whiche thyng that it semeth that ye han power? Now yif thou saye a mows among othere mys that chalanged to hym-self ward ryght and power over alle othere mys, how gret scorn woldestow han of it! (Glosa. So fareth it by men; the body hath power over the body.) For yif thou looke wel upon the body of a wyght, what thyng shaltow fynde more freele than is mankynde; the whiche men ful ofte ben slayn by bytyng of smale flies, or elles with the entryng of crepyng worms in-to the pryvetees of mannes body? [495] But wher schal men fynden any man that mai exercen or haunten any ryght up-on another man, but oonly on his body, or elles up-on thynges that ben lowere than the body, the whiche I clepe fortunous possessiouns? Maystow evere have any comaundement over a free corage? Maystowe remuwen fro the estat of his propre reste a thought that is clyvyng togidre in hym self by stedfast resoun? As whilom a tyraunt wende to confownde a fre-man of corage, and wende to constreyne hym by torment to maken hym discoveren and accusen folk that wisten of a coniuracioun (whiche I clepe a confederacye) that was cast ayens this tyraunt; but this freman boot of his owene tonge, and caste it in the visage of thilk wode tyraunt. So that the tormentes that this tyraunt wende to han maked matere of cruelete, this wise man naked it matere of vertu. [500] But what thing is it that a man may doon to an other man, that he ne may rescyven the same thyng of other folk in hym-self?

491. *But whiche is*, etc., '*mais quæ est*,' i.e. but what is, etc.

491. *over whiche thyng*, etc., '*consideratis, quibus qui præsidere videamini.*'

498. *As whilom*, '*cum*' temporal; but probably Fr. '*comme*' was misunderstood.

500. *tormentes* . . . *it*, '*les tormentes* . . . *li sages homes le* (L. *les*) *fist estre.*'

(Or thus : what may a man don to folk, that folk ne may don hym the same?) I have herd told of Busyrides, that was wont to sleen his gestes that herberweden in his hous, and he was slayn hym-self of Ercules that was his gest. Regulus hadde taken in bataile manye men of Affryke and cast hem in-to feteres, but sone thier after he most yve hise handes to ben bownde with the cheynes of hem that he hadde whilom overcomen. Wenestow thanne that he be myghty that hath no power to doon a thyng that othere ne mai doon in hym that he doth in othere? [505] And yit moreover, yif it so were that thise dygnytes or poweris hadden any propre or naturel goodnesse in hem-self, nevere nolde they comen to schrewes. For contrarious thynges ne ben nat wont to ben I-felashed togydre. Nature refuseth that contrarious thynges ben I-joygned. And so, as I am in certeyn that ryght wykkyd folk han dignytees ofte tyme, thanne scheweth it wel that dignytees and poweres ne ben nat gode of hir owene kynde, syn that they suffren hem-selve to cleven or joynen hem to schrewes. And certes the same thyng mai I most digueliche juggen and seyn of alle the yiftes of fortune that most plenteuously comen to schrewes. Of the whiche yiftes I trowe that it oughte ben considered, that no man douteth that he ne is strong in whom he seeth strengthe; [510] and in whom that swyftnesse is, sooth it is that he is swyft; also musyke maketh mucisyens, and phisyk maketh phisicyens, and rethoryke, rethoriens. For-why the nature of every thyng maketh his proprete, ne it is nat entremedlyd with the effect of contrarious thynges, and of wil it chaseth out thynges that to it ben contrarie. But certes rychesse mai nat restreine

avarice unstaunchd; ne power ne maketh nat a man myghty over hym-selve, whiche that vicyous lustes holden destreyned with cheynes that ne mowen nat ben unbownden. And dignytees that ben yvven to schrewide folk nat oonly ne maketh hem nat digne, but it scheweth rather al opynly that they been unworthy and undigne. And whi is it thus? Certes for ye han joie to clepen thynges with false names, that beren hem al in the contrarie; the whiche names ben ful ofte reproved by the effect of the same thynges; [515] so that thise ilke rychesse ne oughten nat by ryghte to ben cleped rychesse, ne swyche power ne aughte nat ben clepyd power, ne swiche dignyte ne aughte nat ben clepyd dignyte. And at the laste, I may conclude the same thyng of alle the yiftes of fortune, in whiche ther nys no thyng to ben desired, ne that hath in hym-selve naturel bownte. as it is ful wel yscene. For neither thei ne joygnen hem nat alwey to gode men, ne maken hem alwey gode to whom they been I-ioyned.

‘*Novimus quantas dederit.*’—Metrum 6

We han wel knowen how many grete harmes and destrucciouns weren I-doon by the emperour Nero. He leet brennen the cite of Rome, and made sleen the senatours; and he cruel whilom sloughe his brothir, and he was makid moyst with the blood of his modir (that is to seyn, he leet sleen and sliiten the body of his modir to seen wher he was conceyved); [520] and he lookede on every halve uppon hir cold deed body, ne no teer ne wette his face, but he was so hardherted that he myghte ben domesman or juge of hir dede beaute. And natheles yit governed this Nero by septe alle the peples that Phebus (the sonne) may seen,

502. *Busyrides*, rather ‘*Busirus*,’ as in B. 3293; but Aq. has ‘*Busirides*.’

505. *Wenestow* . . . *othere*, nonsense, due either to mistranslation of ‘*de faire que*’ (‘*efficere ne*’), or to text-corruption, a *thyng* belonging after 2nd to *doom*.

512. *of wil*, ‘*ultro*, i.e. *sponte*’; C₂ A₁ as *of wil*, A₂ *offt times*, Cx. omits and . . . *contrarie*.

514. *dignytees* . . . *it*, ‘*dignete* (L. *dignites*) . . . fait elle (L. font elle)’; cp. 449.

514. *that beren hem* goes with *thynges*, i.e. which behave in just the opposite way.

519. *We han*, etc., ‘*nouimus*.’

519. *made sleen*, ‘*fast ocire*.’

comynge fro his uttreste arysynge til he hidde his bemes undir the wawes. (That is to seyn he governede al the peples by ceptre imperiale that the sonne goth aboute from est to west.) And ek this Nero governyde by ceptre all the peples that ben undir the colde sterres that highten the vij Tryones. (This is to seyn he governede alle the peples that ben under the partye of the north.) And eek Nero governede alle the peples that the vyolent wynd Nothus scorklith, and baketh the brennyng sandes by his drye heete (that is to seyn, al the peple in the south). [525] But yit ne myghte nat al his heie power torne the woodnesse of this wikkid Nero. Allas! it is grevous fortune as ofte as wikkid sweerd is joyned to cruel venym (that is to seyn, venymows cruelte to lordschipe).'

'*Tum ego scis inquam.*'—Prosa 7

Than seyde I thus: 'Thow woost wel thi-selve that the covetise of mortel thynges ne hadden nevere lordschipe of me, but I have wel desired matere of thynges to done (as who seith, I desirede to have matiere of governaunce over comunalites), for vertue stille sholde nat elden (that is to seyn that, list that, or he waxe oold, his vertu, that lay now ful stille, ne schulde nat perysshe unexercised in governaunce of comune, for whiche men myghten speken or wryten of his gode government).'

'For sothe,' quod sche, 'and that is a thyng that mai drawen to governaunce swiche hertes as ben worthy and noble of hir nature, [530] but natheles it may nat drawen or tollen swiche hertes as ben I-brought to the ful perfeccioun of vertue, that is to seyn, covetise of glorie and renoun to han wel adminystred the comune thynges, or doon gode desertes to profyt of the

528. *for*, i.e. that.

529. i.e. lest his virtue should perish, etc. For and that C₁ reads *it*, Cx. A₂ omit.

comune. For see now and considere how litel and how voyde of alle prys is thyllk glorie. Certeyn thyng is, as thou hast learned by the demonstracioun of astronomye, that al the envyrourynge of the erthe aboute ne halt but the resoun of a prykke at regard of the gretnesse of hevene; that is to seyn that, yif ther were maked comparysoun of the erthe to the gretnesse of hevene, men wolde juggen in al that the erthe heelde no space. Of the whiche litel region of this world, the ferthe partye is enhabited with lyvyng beestes that we knowen, as thou hast thy-selve learned by Tholome that proveth it. [535] And yif thou haddest withdrawen and abated in thy thought fro thilke ferthe partie as moche space as the see and the mareys contene and overgoon, and as moche space as the region of drowghte overstreccheth (that is to seyn sandes and desertes), wel nynethe sholde ther duellen a ryght streyte place to the habitacioun of men. And ye thanne, that ben envyroured and closed with-ynne the leeste prykke of thilke prykke, thynken ye to manifesten or publischen your renoun and doon yowr name for to be born forth? But yowr glorie that is so narwe and so streyt I-thrungen into so litel bowndes, how mochel conteneth it in largesse and in greet doynge? And also set this therto: that manye a nacioun, diverse of tonge and of maneris and ek of resoun of hir lyvyng, ben enhabited in the cloos of thilke lytel habitacle; [540] to the whiche nacyons, what for difficulte of weyes, and what for diversite of langages, and what for defaute of un-usage and entrecomunyng of marchandise, nat oonly the names of synguler men ne may nat strecchen, but eek the fame of citees ne may nat strecchen. At the laste,

533. *halt*, etc., i.e. is accounted but a point in comparison with, etc.

535. *Tholome*, i.e. Ptolemy.

541. *defaute of un-usage*, etc., mixture of 'insolentia', i.e. inconstuetudine (*unusage*) *commercii* (*entrecomunyng*) and 'par faute de (*defaute of*) *acoustumance de mercheandise* (*of marchandise*).

certes, in the tyme of Marcus Tulyus, as hym-selve writ in his book, that the renoun of the comune of Rome ne hadde nat nat yit passid ne clomben over the mountaigne that highte Caucasus; and yit was thilke tyme Rome wel waxen and greetly redouted of the Parthes, and eek of the othere folk enhabitynge aboute. Seestow nat thanne how streyte and how compressid is thilke glorie that ye travailen aboute to schewe and to multelye? [545] May thanne the glorie of a synguler Romeyn stretchen thider as the fame of the name of Rome may nat clymben ne passen? And ek seestow nat that the maneris of diverse folk and ek hir lawes ben discordaunt among hem-selve, so that thilke thyng that som men juggen worthy of preysynge, other folk juggen that it is worthy of torment? And therof comyth it that, though a man delyte hym in preysynge of his renoun, he ne mai nat in no wyse bryngen forthe ne spreden his name to many manere peples. And therefore every maner man aughte to ben apayed of his glorie, that is publysschid among his owene neyghbours; and thilke noble renoun schal ben restreyned withynne the boundes of o manere folk. But how many a man, that was ful noble in his tyme, hath the wrecchid and nedy foryetyng of writeris put out of mynde and doon away; [550] al be it so that, certes, thilke wrytynges profiten litel, the whiche wrytynges long and dirk eelde doth away, both hem and ek hir auctours! But yow men semeth to geten yow a perdurablete, whan ye thynken that in tyme comynge yowr fame schal lasten. But natheles yif thow wolt maken comparysoun to the endles spaces of eternyte, what thyng hastow by whiche thow mayst reioisen the of long lastyng of thi name? For yif ther were makyd comparysoun of the abydyng of a moment to ten thowsand wynter, for as

mochel as bothe two spaces ben endyd, for yit hath the moment som porcioun of it, although it litel be. But natheles thilke selve nowmbre of yeeris, and eek as many yeris as thier-to mai be multiplyed, ne mai nat certes be comparysoun to the perdurablete that is endles; [555] for of thynges that han ende may ben makyd comparysoun, but of thynges that ben withouten ende to thynges that han ende may be makid no comparysoun. And for-thi is it that, al-though renome, of as longe tyme as evere the list to thynken, were thought to the regard of eternyte, that is unstaunchable and infynyt, it ne sholde nat only semen litel, but pleylich ryght noght. But ye men, certes, ne konne doon no thyng aryght, but yif it be byfore the audience of the peple and for idel rumours; and ye forsaken the grete worthynesse of concience and of vertu, and ye seeken yowr gerdouns of the smale wordes of straunge folk. Have now (here and undirstand) in the lyghtnesse of swiche pryde and veyne glorye how a man scornede festyvaly and myniely swich vanyte. [560] Whilom ther was a man that hadde assaiede with stryvyng wordes another man, the whiche, nat for usage of verray vertu but for proud veyn glorie, had taken upon hym falsly the name of a philosophre. This rather man that I spak of thoughte he wolde assaie where he thilke were a philosophre or no; that is to seyn, yif that he wolde han suffride lyghtly in pacience the wronges that weren doon unto hym. This feynede philosophre took pacience a litel while; and whan he hadde resceyved wordes of outrage, he, as in stryvyng ayen and reioysynge of hym-self, seide at the laste ryght thus: "undirstondistow nat that I am a philosophre?" The tother man

543. *that the renoun*, 'that' is often thus used before a direct quotation.

552. *yow men*, etc. (C. x. A₁ *ye men semen*), i.e. it seems to you that, etc.

554. *bothe two*, A₁ Hn. Cx. *bothe tho*; C₂ *bothe the*. *for yit*, i.e. yet.

560. *Have now*, etc., 'Accipe' and 'Or recoit et entent.'

562. *where*, i.e. whether.

564. *took pacience*, 'il prist vn petit en soi (L. omits) pacience.'

answerede ayen ful bytyngely and seyde :
 "I hadde wel undirstonden it yif thou
 haddest holde thi tonge stille." But
 what is it to thise noble worthy men?
 —for, certes, of swych folk speke I that
 seken glorie with vertue—What is it,
 quod sche; 'what atteyneth fame to
 swiche folk, whan the body is rescolved by
 the deeth at the laste? [565] For if it so
 be that men dyen in all (that is to seyen,
 body and soule), the whiche thing our
 reson defendeth us to byleeven, thanne
 is ther no glorie in no wyse; for what
 schulde thilke glorie ben, whan he, of
 whom thilke glorie is seyde to be, nys
 ryght naught in no wise? And yif the
 soule, whiche that hath in hym-self
 science of gode werkes, unbownden fro
 the prysone of the erthe, weendeth frely
 to the hevene, despiseth it nat thanne
 al erthly ocupacioun; and, beyng in
 hevene, reioyseth that it is exempt fro alle
 erthly thynges? (As who seith, thanne
 rekketh the soule of noon othir thyng,
 ne of renoun of this world.) [570]

'*Quicumque solam mente.*'—Metrum 7

Who so that with overthrowng
 thought oonly seketh glorie of fame, and
 weneth that it be sovereyn good, lat hym
 looke upon the brode schewyng contrees
 of the hevene, and upon the streyte sete
 of this erthe; and he shal be asschamed
 of the encres of his name, that mai nat
 fulfille the litel compas of the erthe. O!
 what coveyten proude folk to lyften up
 hir nekkes on idel in the dedly yok of
 this world? For al though that renoun
 y-sprad, passyng to ferne peples, goth
 by diverse tonges; and al-though that
 greet houses or kynredes shynen with
 cleer titles of honours; yit natheles deth
 despiseth al heye glorie of fame, and
 deth wrappeth to gidre the heyghe heved
 and the lowe, and maketh egal and evene
 the heygheste to the loweste. [575]
 Where wonen now the bones of trewe
 Fabricius? What is now Brutus or

570. C₂ Hn. Cx. rekketh the soule of no glorie
 of renoun. A₁ omits from *As who to this world.*

stierne Caton? The thynne fame yit
 lastyng of here idel names is marked
 with a fewe lettres. But al-though that
 we han knowen the fayre wordes of the
 fames of hem, it is nat yyven to knowen
 hem that ben dede and consumpt.
 Liggeth thanne stille, al outrely unknow-
 able, ne fame maketh yow nat knowe.
 And yif ye wene to lyve the longere
 for wynd of yowr mortel name whan o
 cruel day schal ravyssche yow, than is
 the seconde deth duellyng unto yow.'
 (Glose. The first deeth he clepeth here
 departyng of the body and the soule,
 and the seconde deth he clepeth as
 here the styntyng of the renoun of
 fame.) [580]

'*Set ne me inexorable.*'—Prosa 8

'But for as mochel as thou schalt
 nat wenen,' quod sche, 'that I bere an
 untretable batayle ayens fortune, yit som-
 tyme it by-falleth that sche desceyvable
 desserveth to han ryght good thank of men.
 And that is whan sche hir-self opneth,
 and whan sche discovereth hir frownt
 and scheweth hir maneris. Peraventure
 yit undirstandestow nat that I schal seie.
 It is a wonder that I desire to telle, and
 for-thi unnethe may I unplyten my
 sentence with wordes. For I deme that
 contrarious Fortune profiteth more to
 men than Fortune debonayre. For
 alwey, whan Fortune semeth debonayre,
 thanne sche lieth, falsly byhetyng the
 hope of welefulnesse; but forsothe con-
 trarious Fortune is alwey sothfast, whan
 sche scheweth hir-self unstable thurw hir
 chaungyng. [585] The amyable Fortune
 desceyveth folk; the contrarie Fortune
 techeth. The amyable Fortune byndeth
 with the beaute of false goodes the hertes
 of folk that usen hem; the contrarye
 Fortune unbyndeth hem by the knowyng
 of freel welefulnesse. The amyable

578. Liggeth thanne, etc., 'jacetis,' read as
 imperative on account of Fr. 'Donques gesiez
 vous.'

581-614. A₁ omits, beginning again at II, met. 1.

581. bere . . . batayle, 'gerere bellum.'

Fortune maystow seen al-vey wyndy and flowynge, and evere mysknowynge of hirself; the contrarie Fortune is atempre and restreyned and wys thurw exercise of hir adversite. At the laste, amyable Fortune with hir flaterynge draweth myswandrynge men fro the sovereyne good; the contrarious Fortune ledeth ofte folk ayen to sothfast goodes, and haleth hem ayen as with an hook. Wenestow than that thow aughttest to leeten this a litel thyng, that this aspre and horrible Fortune hath discovered to the the thoughtes of thi trewe freendes. [590] For-why this ilke Fortune hath departed and uncovered to the bothe the certein visages and eek the doutes visages of thi felawes. Whan she departed away fro the, she took away hir freendes and lefte the thyne freendes. Now whanne thow were ryche and welful, as the semede, with how mochel woldestow han bought the fulle knowynge of thys (that is to seyn, the knowynge of thyne verray freendes)? Now pleyne the nat thanne of rychesse y-lorn, syn thow hast fownden the moste precyous kynde of rychesse, that is to seyn, thi verray freendes.

'Quod mundus stabili fide.'—Metrum 8

That the world with stable feyth varieth accordable chaungynge; that the contrarious qualites of elementes holden among hemself allyaunce perdurable; [595] that Phebus, the sonne, with his goldene chariet bryngeth forth the rosene day; that the moone hath comaundement over the nyghtes, whiche nyghtes Esperus, the eve sterre, hath brought; that the see, gretly to flowen, constreyneth with a certein eende his floodes, so that it is nat lewful to strecche his brode termes or howndes upon the erthes (that is to seyn, to coveren al the erthe)—al this accordaunce of thynges is bounde with love, that governeth erthe and see, and

588. *exercise*, 'exercitatione,' i.e. experience.
595. *varieth*, etc., 'concordes variat vices.'
597. B *gredy constreyneth to flowen*.

hath also comandement to the hevene. And yif this love slakede the bridelis, alle thynges that now loven hem to-gidres wolden make batayle contynuely, and stryven to fordo the fassoun of this world, the which they now leden in accordable feith by fayre moevynge. This love halt togidres peples joyned with an holy boond, and knytteth sacrement of mariages of chaste loves; and love enditeth lawes to trewe felawes. [600] O weleful were mankynde, yif thilke love that governeth hevene governede yowr corages.'

EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDUS

INCIPIIT LIBER TERTIUS

'Iam cantum illa.'—Prosa 1

By this sche hadde ended hir song, whan the swetnesse of here dite hadde thurw perced me, that was desyrous of herknyng, and I a-stoned hadde yit streyghte myn cres (that is to seyn, to herkne the bet what sche wolde seye). So that a litel hereafter I seide thus: 'O thow that art sovereyne confort of angwyssous corages, so thow hast remounted and norysshed me with the weyghte of thi sentences and with delyt of thy syngynge; so that I trowe nat now that I be unparygal to the strokes of Fortune (as who seith, I dar wel now suffren alle the assautes of Fortune and wel defende me fro hir). And tho remedies whiche that thou seydest her byforn that weren ryght scharpe, nat only that I ne am agrisen of hem now, but I, desiros of herynge, axe gretly to heren thio remedies.' [605]

Thanne seyde sche thus: 'That feelde

598. *hath comandement to*, 'imperitans celo,' 'commandant au ciel.'

598. *loven hem to-gidres*, 's'entreatment,' i.e. love one another. *contynuely*, 'continuo'; rather, 'straightway.'

600. B *A2 the sacr.*, Cx. *mariage*.

605. *that weren* (C₂ A₁ om. *that*), omitted subject as in 629.

I ful wel,' quod sche, 'whan thou ententyf and stille ravyschedest my wordes, and I abood til that thou haddest swich habite of thi thought as thou hast now, or elles til that I my-self hadde maked to the the same habite, whiche that is a more verray thyng. And certes the remenant of thynges that ben yet to seie ben swiche, that first whan men tasten hem, they ben bytynge; but whan they ben resceyved with-ynne a wyght, thanne ben thei swete. But for thou seyst that thow art so desyrus to herkne hem, with how greet brennyng woldestow glowen, yif thou wistest whider I wol leden the!'

'Whider is that?' quod I.

'To thilke verraye welefulnesse,' quod sche, 'of whiche thyn herte dremeth; [610] but forasmoche as thi syghte is occupyed and destourbed by imagynacoun of erthly thynges, thou mayst nat yit seen thilke selve welefulnesse.'

'Do,' quod I, 'and schewe me what is thilke verraye welefulnesse, I preie the, withoute taryinge.'

'That wol I gladly do,' quod sche, 'for the cause of the. But I wol first markenthe by wordes, and I wol enforcen me to enforme the thilke false cause of blisfulnesse that thou more knowest; so that whanne thou hast fully byhoolden thilke false goodes and torned thin eighen to the tother syde, thou mowe knowe the cleernesse of verray blisfulnesse.'

'*Qui severe ingenuum.*'—Metrum I

'Who-so wole sowe a feld plenteuous, let hym first delyvren it of thornes, and kerve asondir with his hook the bussches and the feern, so that the corn may comen hevvy of crys and of greynes.

606. *whiche that*, etc., 'quod est verius.'

612. *Do and schewe*, 'Fac . . . et demonstra,' 'Fai . . . et demonstre.'

613. *for the cause of the*, i.e. for thy sake.

613. *marken the*, 'je te seneherai'; *the dative*.

613. *that thou more*, etc., i.e. which thou art more familiar with.

[615] Hony is the more swete, if mouthes han first tasted savours that ben wykke. The sterres schynen more aggreablye whan the wynd Nothus leteth his plowngy blastes; and afir that Lucifer, the day-sterre, hath chased away the dirke nyght, the day the fairere ledeth the rosene hors of the sonne. And ryght so thow, byhooldyng first the false goodes, bygyn to withdrawe thy nekke fro the yok of erthely affeccions; and afterward the verray goodes schullen entren into thy corage.'

'*Cum defixo paululum.*'—Prosa 2

Tho fastnede sche a litel the syghte of hir eyen, and withdrowghe hir ryght as it were into the streyte seete of here thought, and bigan to speke ryght thus: 'Alle the cures,' quod sche, 'of mortel folk, whiche that travailen hem in many manere studies, gon certes by diverse weyes; but nathcles thei enforcen hem alle to comyn oonly to oon ende of blisfulnesse. [620] And blisfulnesse is swiche a good, that who-so that hath geten it, he ne may over that nothyng more desire. And this thyng forsothe is the soverayn good that conteneth in hym-self alle maner goodes; to the whiche goode if ther fayled any thyng, it myghte nat ben sovereyn good, for thanne wer ther som good out of thilke sovereyn good, that myghte ben desired. Now is it cleer and certeyne thanne, that blisfulnesse is a parfyte estat by the congregacioun of alle goodes; the whiche blisfulnesse, as I have seyde, alle mortel folk enforcen hem to geten by diverse weyes. Forwhy the covetise of verray good is naturely I-plauntyd in the hertes of men, but the myswandrynge errour mysledeth hem into false goodes. [625] Of the whiche men, some of hem wenen that sovereyn good be to lyven with-oute nede of any thyng, and travaylen hem to ben

616. *mouthes han*, etc., 'si malus ora (misconstrued as nom.) prius sapor edat.'

617. *hors*, horses.

habundaunt of rychesses. And some othere men demen that sovereyn good be for to be ryght digne of reverence, and enforcen hem to ben reverenced among hir neyghbours by the honours that thei han I-geeten. And some folk ther ben that holden that ryght heye power be sovereyn good, and enforcen hem for to reignen or elles to joygnen hem to hem that reignen. And it semeth to some other folk, that noblesse of renoun be the sovereyn good, and hasten hem to geten hem gloryouse name by the artes of werre or of pees. And many folk mesuren and gessen that the sovereyn good be joye and gladnesse, and wenen that it be ryght blisful thyng to plowngen hem in voluptuous delyt. [630] And ther ben folk that entrechaungen the causes and the endes of thyse forseide goodes, as they that desiren rychesses to han power and delites, or elles they desiren power for to have moneye or for cause of renoun. In thise thynges and in swiche other thynges is torned al the entencioun of desyringes and werkes of men; as thus: noblesse and favour of people whiche that yveth to men, as it semeth hem, a maner cleernesse of renoun; and wyf and children, that men desiren for cause of delyt and myrnesse. But for-sothe freendes schulde nat ben rekned among the goodes of fortune, but of vertu, for it is a ful hooly maner thyng; alle thise othere thynges for-sothe ben taken for cause of power or elles for cause of delyt. [635] Certes now am I redy to referren the goodes of the body to thise forseide thynges aboven; for it semeth that strengthe and gretnesse of body yyven power and worthynesse, and that beaute and swyftnesse yyven noblesse and glorie of renoun; and heele of body semeth yyven delyt. In alle thise thynges it semeth oonly that blisfulnesse is desyred; for-why thilk thing that every man desireth moost over alle thynges

632. *is torned*, mistranslation of 'versatur'; also in Fr. 'est tournée'.

635. *freendes* '(genus) amicorum,' hence the *it* below.

he demeth that it be the sovereyn good; but I have diffynd that blisfulnesse is the sovereyn good; for whiche every wyght demeth that thilke estat that he desireth over alle thynges, that it be blisfulnesse. Now hastow thanne byforn thyne eien almost al the purposede forme of the welefulnesse of mankynde; that is to seyn rychesses, honours, power, glorie, and delites. [640] The whiche delit oonly considered Epicurus, and juggid and establisseyde that delyt is the soverayn good, for as moche as alle othere thynges, as hym thoughte, byrefte away joye and myrthe from the herte. But I retorne ayen to the studies of men, of whiche men the corage alwey rehcereth and seketh the sovereyn good, al be it so that it be with a dyrkyd memorie; but he not by whiche path, ryght as a dronke man not nat by whiche path he may retourne hom to his hous. Semeth it thanne that folk foleyn and erren, that enforcen hem to have nede of no thyng? Certes ther nys noon other thyng that mai so wel performe blisfulnesse, as an estat plentevous of alle godes, that ne hath nede of noon other thyng, but that it is suffisant of hym-self un-to hym-self. [645] And foleyn swiche folk, thanne, that wenen that thilke thyng that is ryght good, that it be eek ryght worthy of honour and of reverence? Certes, nay. For that thyng nys neither foul ne worthy to ben despysed that wel neyghe al the entencioun of mortel folk travaylen for to geten it. And power, aughte nat that ek to ben rekned amonge goodes? What elles? For it nys nat to wene that thilke thyng that is most worthy of alle thynges be feble and withoute strengthe. And cleernesse of renoun, aughte that to ben despysed? Certes ther may no man for-

640. *purposede* (i.e. proposed) should precede *byforn thyne eien*: misreading of Aq. 'habes ante oculos propositam formam humane,' etc.

641. *cyrefte away*, etc., should be *broughte . . . to the herte*: 'afferre' misread as 'auferre'.

642. *rehcereth and seketh*, 'repetit'; *rehcereth* is probably due to *studies*, 'studia' (which here means 'efforts').

sake, that alle thyng that is right excellent and noble, that it ne semeth to ben ryght cleer and renomede. For certes it nedeth nat to saie that blisfulnesse [ne] be angwyssous ne drery, ne subgit to grevaunces ne to sorwes; syn that in ryght litele thynges folk seken to haven and to usen that may delyten hem. [650] Certes thise ben thise thynges that men wolen and desiren to geten, and for this cause desiren they rychesses, dignytes, reignes, glorie, and delices; for ther-by wenen they to han suffysaunce, honour, power, renoun, and gladnesse. Thanne is it good that men seken thus, by so manye diverse studies. In whiche desir it mai lyghtly be schewyd how greet is the strengthe of nature. For how so that men han diverse sentences and discordynge, algates men accorden alle in lovyng the eende of good.

'Quantas rerum flectat.'—Metrum 2

It likethe me to schewe by subtil soong, with slakke and delytable sown of strenges, how that Nature, myghty, enclyneth and flytteth the governementes of thynges; and by whiche lawes sche, purveiable, kepith the grete world; and how sche, byndynge, restreyneth alle thynges by a boond that may nat be unbownde. [655] Al be it so that the lyouns of the contre of Pene beren the fayre chaynes, and taken metes of the handes of folk that yeven it hem, and dreden hir stourdy maistres of whiche thei ben wont to suffre betynges; yif that hir horrible mouthes ben by-bled (that is to seyn, of beestes devoured), hir corage of tyme passed, that hath ben idel and rested, repeireth ayen, and thei roren grevously, and remembren on hir nature, and slaken hir nekkes from hir cheynes unbownde; and hir mayster fyrst, to-torn with bloody

tooth, assaieth the wode wratthes of hem (this to seyn thei freten hir maister). And the janglyng brid that syngeth on the heighe braunches (that is to seyn, in the wode), and after is enclosed in a streyte cage, al thoughe that the pleyng bysynes of men yeveth hem honyed drynkes and large metes with swete studyes, yit natheles yif thilke bryd skippyng out of hir streyte cage seith the agreable schadwes of the wodes, sche defouleth with hir feet hir metes Lschad, and seketh mornynge oonly the wode, and twytereth desyryng the wode with hir swete voys. [660] The yerde of a tree, that is haled a-doun by myghty strengthe, boweth redily the crop adown; but yif the hand of hym that it bente leet it goon ageyn, anon the crop loketh upryght to hevене. The sonne, Phebus, that falleth at even in the westrene wawes, retorneth ayen eft sones his cart, by a pryve path, there as it is wont aryse. Alle thynges seken ayen to hir propre cours, and alle thynges reioysen hem of hir retornynge ayen to hir nature. Ne noon ordenaunce is by-taken to thynges, but that that hath joyned the endynge to the bygynnyng, and hath makid the cours of it-self stable (that it chaunge nat from his propre kynde).

'Vos quoque terrena animalia.'—

Prosa 3

Certes also ye men, that ben erthliche beestes, dremen alwey your bygynnyng, al thoughe it be with a thynne ymaginacioun; and by a maner thought, al be it nat clerly ne parfitely, ye loken from afer to thilke verray fyn of blisfulnesse. [665] And therefore naturel entencioun ledeth yow to thilke verray good, but many maner errours mystorneth yow ther fro. Considere now yif that by thilke thynges by whiche a man weneth

658. *assaieth*, 'imbuit.' Perhaps we should read *apaith*.

659. *hem*. Cp. the similar transition to plu. in Tales, F 610 ff., where this passage is quoted.

659. *out of hir*, etc., to end of prose, missing in Hn. C₂ A₁ H Cx. studye.

654. *slakke and delytable*, etc., 'lentis fidibus' and 'par sons delitables.' *slakke* is probably Adam's mistake for *wakke* or *waike* (i.e. soft), the usual gloss for *lentus*.

656. *Pene*, 'Pæni leones.'

to geten hym blisfulnesse, yif that he mai comen to thilk ende that he weneth to come by nature. For yif that moneye, or honours, or thise othere forseide thynges, brynge to men swiche a thyng that no good ne sayle hem ne semeth faile, certes thanne wol I graunte that they ben maked blisful by thilke thynges that thei han geten. But yif it so be that thilke thynges mowen nat performen that they byheten, and that there be defeaute of manye goodis, scheweth it nat thanne clerly that false beaute of blysfulnesse is knowen and ataynt in thilke thynges. First and forward thow thi-self, that haddest haboundances of rychesses nat longe agoon, I aske yif that, in the habowndance of alle swiche rychesses, thow were nevere angwyssous ne sory in thy corage of any wrong or grevance that by-tydde the on any side?' [670]

'Certes,' quod I, 'it ne remembreth me nat that evere I was so fre of my thought that I ne was alwey in angwyse of som-what.'

'And was nat that,' quod sche, 'for that the lakkyde somewhat that thow woldest nat han lakkyd, or elles thou haddest that thow noldest nat han had?'

'Ryght so is it,' quod I.

'Than desiredest thow the presence of the toon and the absence of the tothir?'

'I graunte wel,' quod I.

'For-sothe,' quod sche, 'thanne nedeth ther som-what that every man desireth?'

'Yee, ther-nedeth,' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'and he that hath lak or nede of aught nys nat in every wey sufficient to hym-self?'

'No,' quod I. [675]

'And thow,' quod sche, 'in al the plente of thy richesces haddest thilke lakke of suffisant?'

'What elles?' quod I.

'Thanne mai nat richesces maken that a man nys neddy, ne that he be suffisaunt to hym-self; and yit that was

it that thei byhighten, as it semeth. And eek certes I trow that this be gretly to considere, that moneye ne hath nat in his owene kynde that it ne mai ben bynomen of hem that han it, maugre hem.'

'I byknowe it wel,' quod I.

'Whi sholdestow nat byknowen it,' quod sche, 'whan every day the strengere folk bynynen it fro the feblere, maugre hem? For whennes comen elles thise foreyne compleyntes or queeles of pledynges but for that men axen hir moneye that hath ben bynomen hem by force or by gyle, and alwey maugre hem?' [680]

'Right so is it,' quod I.

'Than,' quod sche, 'hath a man nede to seken hym foreyne help by whiche he may defenden his moneye?'

'Who mai seie nay?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'and hym nedide noon help yif he ne hadde no moneye that he myghte leese.'

'That is douteles,' quod I.

'Than is this thyng torned into the contrarie,' quod sche; 'for rychesses, that men wenen scholde maken suffisaunce, they maken a man rather have nede of foreyne help. Whiche is the maner or the gyse,' quod sche, 'that rychesse mai dryve away nede? Riche folk, mai they neyther han hungir ne thurst? Thise riche men, may they fele no cold on hir lymes in wynter? But thow wolt answeren that ryche men han Inoghe wher-with thei mai staunchen hir hungir, and slaken hir thurst, and don away cold. [685] In this wise mai nede be confortyd by richesces, but certes nede mai nat al outrely be doon away; for thoughe this nede that is alwey gapynge and gredy, be fulfild with richesces and axe any thyng, yit duelleth

677. *byhighten*, i.e. promised.

680. *foreyne compleyntes*, etc., 'forenses querimonias' (i.e. public appeals) and 'complaintes de plaiz.'

686. *and axe any thyng* (Cx. H omit *axe*) should follow *gredy*; i.e. is always asking for something. *yit duelleth*, etc., i.e. the need of food, drink, etc., always remains to be filled.

670. C inserts *that*, Cx. H *the* after *aske*.

673. C₁ B H Cx. *desirest*.

thanne a nede that myghte be fulfild. I holde me stille and telle nat how that litel thyng suffiseth to nature; but certes to avarice Inowghe suffiseth nothyng. For syn that rychesse ne mai nat al doon away nede, but richesses maken nede, what mai it thanne be that ye wenen that richesses mowen yyven yow suffici-
saunce?

'Quamvis fluente dives.'—Metrum 3

Al weere it so that a riche covetous man hadde a ryver or a goter fletynge al of gold, yit sholde it nevere staunchen his covetise; and thoughe he hadde his nekke charged with precyous stones of the rede see, and thoughe he do ere his feeldes plentevous with an hundred oxen, nevere ne schal his bytynge bysynesse forleeten hym while he lyveth, ne the lyghte richesses ne schal nat beren hym companye whan he is deed. [600]

'Set dignitatibus.'—Prosa 4

But dignytees, to whom thei ben comen, make they hym honourable and reverent? Han thei nat so gret strengthe that thei may putten vertus in the hertes of folk that usen the lordschipes of hem, or elles may they don away the vices? Certes thei ben nat wont to don away wikkidnesse, but thei ben wont rather to schewen wykkydnesse. And ther-of cometh it that y have right gret disdayn that dignytes ben yyven ofte to wikkide men. For which thyng Catullus clepid a consul of Rome that hyghte Nomyus "postum" or "boch" (as who seith, he clepid hym a congregacioun of vices in his brest, as a postum is ful of cor-

688. *what*, i.e. why, 'quid.'

689. C₂ A₁ Hn. omit *or a goter*. The 2nd clause is inaccurately translated and should be, following Fr.: *and hepede richesses that yit sholde nevere*, etc.

690. *do ere*, i.e. have his fields plowed.

691. *Han thei nat*, etc., 'Num vis ea est magistratibus,' should be *Han lordschipes nat*, etc. . . . *of folk that usen hem*. For *nat*, cp. 105.

694. *Nomyus* (A₁ *vonnus*), Catullus (*Carm.* 52) alludes to Nomyus Struma. Some Boethius MSS. read *Nomium*

rupcioun), al were this Nomyus set in chayere of dygnite. Sestow nat thanne how grete vylenye dignytes don to wikkide men? Certes unworthynesse of wikkide men schulde ben the lesse I-sene if thei neere renommed of none honours. [695] Certes thou thi-self ne myghtest nat ben broght, with as many perils as thow myghtest suffren, that thow woldest beren the magistrat with Decorat (that is to seyn, that for no peril that myghte byfallen the by offence of the kyng Theodorik, thou noldest nat be felawe in governaunce with Decorat), whan thow seye that he hadde wikkide corage of a likerous schrewe and of an accusour. Ne I ne mai nat for swiche honours juggen hem worthy of reverence that I deme and holde unworthy to han thilke same honours. Now yif thow seie a man that were fulfild of wysdom, certes thou ne myghtest nat deme that he were unworthy to the honour or elles to the wisdom of whiche he is fulfild?

'No,' quod I.

'Certes dignytees,' quod sche, 'aperteignen properly to vertu, and vertu transporteth dignyte anon to thilke man to whiche sche hir-self is conioigned. [700] And for as moche as honours of peple ne mai nat maken folk digne of honour, it is wel seyn cleerly that thei ne han no propre beaute of dignyte. And yet men aughten taken more heede in this. For yif a wykkyd wyght be in so mochel the fowlere and the more out-cast that he is despysed of moost folk, so as dignyte ne mai nat maken schrewes worthy of no reverence, than maketh dignyte schrewes rather so much more despised than preyed, the whiche schrewes dignyte scheweth to moche folk; and forsothe nat unpunysched (that is for to

696. *beren*, 'gerere' (cp. 581); *magistrat* (O.F. *magistrat*), 'magistratum'; i.e. hold office.

702. C₁ A₂ H Cx. B omit *wykkyd and the fowlere and so much more*; C₂ A₁ Hn. omit *in before so mochel*; C₂ Hn. A₂ B place *the which* . . . *folk after reverence*; A₁ alters the passage. *so as*, i.e. since.

seyne that schrewes revengen hem ayenward uppon dignytes), for thei yelden ayen to dignytes as greet gerdoun, whan they by-spotten and defoulen dignytes with hir vylenye. And for as mochel as thou mow knowe that thilke verray reverence ne mai nat comen by thise schadwy transitorie dignytes, undirstond now thus: [705] yif that a man hadde used and had manye maner dignytes of consules, and weere comen peraventure among straunge nacions, scholde thilke honour maken hym worscheipful and redouted of straunge folk? Certes yif that honour of peple were a natureel yifte to dignytes, it ne myghte never cesen no where amonges no maner folk to don his office; right as fyre in every contre ne stynteth nat to eschaufen and to ben hoot. But for as mochel as for to be holden honourable or reverent ne cometh nat to folk of hir propre strengthe of nature, but oonly of the false opynyoun of folk (that is to seyn, that weenen that dignytes maken folk digne of honour), anon therefore, whan that thei comen there as folk ne knowen nat thilke dignytes, hir honours vanysschen a-way, and that anon. But that is amonges straunge folk, maystow seyn. Ne amonges hem ther thei weren born, ne duren nat thilke dignytes alwey? [710] Certes the dignyte of the provostrie of Rome was whilom a greet power; now nys it no thyng but an idel name, and the rente of the senatorie a greet charge. And yif a wyght whilom hadde the office to taken heede to the vitayles of the peple, as of corn and othere thynges, he was holden amonges grete; but what thyng is now more out cast than thilke provostrie? And, as I have seyd a litel here bysorn, that thilke thyng that hath no propre beute of hym-self resceyveth somtyme prys and

710. *verren born*, i.e. spring. *ne duren nat*, 'Nim', etc.

711. *rente*, tax.

712. *grete*, great people.

713. *that* formally introduces the quoted statement as in 543.

schynynge, and som-tyme leeseth it, by the opynyoun of usaunces. Now yif that dignytes thanne ne mowen nat make folk digne of reverence, and if that dignytes waxen foule of hir wil by the filthe of schrewes, and yif dignytes leesen hir schynynge by chaungynge of tymes, and yif thei waxen fowle by estimacioun of peple, what is it that they han in hemself of beaute that oughte ben desired? [715] (As who seith noon.) Thanne ne mowen they yeven no beaute of dignyte to noone othere.

'Quamvis se Tirio.'—Metrum 4

Al be it so that the proude Nero, with al his wode luxure, kembde hym and apparayled hym with faire purples of Tyrie and with white peerles, algates yit throf he haatful to alle folk (this is to seyn that, al was he byhated of alle folk, yit this wikkide Nero hadde gret lordschipe), and yaf whilom to the reverentes senatours the unworschipful seetis of dignytes. (Unworschipful seetes he clepeth here, for that Nero, that was so wikkide, yaf tho dignytes.) Who wolde thanne reasonably wenen that blisfulnesse were in swiche honours as ben yyven by vicious schrewes? [720]

'An vero regna.'—Prosa 5

But regnes and familiarites of kynges, mai thei maken a man to ben myghti? How elles, whan hir blisfulnesse dureth perpetuely? But certes the olde age of tyme passed, and ek of present tyme now, is ful of ensaumples how that kynges han chaungyd into wrecchidnesse out of hir welefulnesse. O, a noble thyng and a cleer thyng is power that is nat fownden myghti to kepe it-self! And yif that power of remes be auctour and makere of blisfulnesse, yif thilke power lakketh

713. *of usaunces*, 'utentium', is possibly 'des usans' mistaken for 'des usances'; it should be 'of hem that usen hem.'

720. C₁ Hn. H to for *hy*.

721. *How elles*, etc., glossed *gronice* in C₁.

on any syde, amenuseth it nat thilke blisfulnesse and bryngeth in wrecchidnesse? But yit, al be it so that the remedies of mankynde strecchen brode, yit moot ther nede ben moche folk over whiche that every kyng ne hath no lordschipe ne comaundement. [725] And certes uppon thilke syde that power fayleth, whiche that maketh folk blisful, ryght on the same syde noun-power entreth undir-nethe, that maketh hem wrecches. In this manere thanne moten kynges han more porcioun of wrecchidnesse than of welefulnesse. A tyraunt, that was kyng of Sysile, that hadde assayed the peril of his estat, schewede by simylytude the dredes of remedies by gastnesse of a swerd that heng over the heved of his familyer. What thyng is thanne this power, that mai nat down away the bytynges of bysynesse, ne eschewe the prykkes of drede? And certes yit wolde thei lyven in sykernesse, but thei may nat, and yit they glorifien hem in hir power. [730] Holdestow thanne that thilke man be myghty, that thow seest that he wolde doon that he may nat doon? And holdestow thanne hym a myghti man, that hath envyrowned his sydes with men of armes or sergeantes, and dredeth more hem that he maketh agast thanne thei dredden hym, and that is put in the handes of hise servautes for he scholde seme myghty? But of familyers or servants of kynges, what scholde I telle the any thyng, syn that I my-self have schewyd the that rewmes hem-self ben ful of greet feblesse? The whiche familyeres certes the real power of kynges, in hool estat and in estat abated, ful ofte throweth adoun. Nero constreynede Senek, his familyer and his mayster, to chesen on what deeth he wolde deye. [735] Antonyus comaundede that knyghtes slown with here swerdes Papynian, his familyer, whiche Papynian

726. noun-power, impotence.

733. *familiers* or *servantes*, Fr. 'familieres,' and Lat. 'familiaribus' read as 'famularibus.'

736. *Antonyus*, mistake of some Latin texts for *Antoninus*, i.e. Caracalla.

that had ben long tyme ful myghty amonges hem of the court. And yet certes thei wolden bothe han renounced hir power; of whiche two Senek enforced hym to yeven to Nero his riches, and also to han gon into solitarie exil. But whan the grete weyghte (that is to seyn of lordes power or of fortune) draweth hem that schullen falle, neither of hem ne myghte don that he wolde. What thyng is thanne thilke powere, that though men han it, yit thei ben agast; and whanne thou woldest han it, thou nart nat siker; and yif thou woldest forleeten it, thow mayst nat eschuen it? But whethir swiche men ben freendes at nede, as ben conseyled by fortune and nat be vertu? [740] Certes swiche folk as weleful fortune maketh frendes, contraryous fortune maketh hem enemys. And what pestilence is more myghty for to anoye a wyght than a familyer enemy?

'*Qui se vult esse potentem.*'—Metrum 5

Who so wol ben myghti he moot daunten his cruel corages, ne putte nat his nekke, overcomen, undir the foule reynes of leccherie. For al be it so that thi lordschipe strecche so fer that the contre of Ynde quaketh at thy comaundementes or at thi lawes, and that the last ile in the see that highte Tyle be thral to the, yit yif thou maist nat putten away thi foule dirke desires, and dryven out fro the wrecchide compleyntes, certes it nys no power that thow hast. [745]

'*Gloria vero quam fallax.*'—Prosa 6

But glorie, how deceyvable and how foul is it ofte! For which thyng nat unskilfully a tragedien (that is to seyn a makere of dytees that highten tragedies) cride and seide: "O glorie, glorie,"

738. *hem that schullen*, etc., 'ipsos casuros.'

739. Should be, *But whether* (introducing simple direct question) *swiche freendes as ben conciled* ('conciliat') *by fortune, and not by vertu, ben a help* ('auxilio' dat. not abl.)?

745. *Tyle*, Ultima Thule.

746. Cp. Euripides, *Androm.* 319.

quod he, "thow nart nothyng elles to thousandes of folk but a greet swellere of eres!" For manye han had ful greet renoun by the false opinyoun of the peple, and what thyng mai ben thought foulere than swiche preysynge? For thilke folk that ben preysed falsly, they mote nedes han schame of hire preysynges. And yif that folk han geten hem thonk or preysynge by here dissertes, what thyng lath thilke pris echid or encrested to the conscience of wise folk, that mesuren hir good, nat by the rumour of the peple, but by sothfastnesse of conscience? And yif it seme a fair thyng a man to han encreced and sprad his name, thanne folweth it that it is demed to ben a foul thyng yif it ne be yspradde and encreced. [750] But, as I seide a litel here byforn, that syn ther moot nedes ben many folk to whiche folk the renoun of a man ne mai nat comen, it byfalleth that he that thow wenest be glorious and renommed semeth in the nexte partie of the erthes to ben withouten glorie and withouten renoun. And certes amonges thise thynges I ne trowe nat that the pris and the grace of the peple nys neyther worthi to ben remembred, ne cometh of wys jugement, ne is ferme perdurably.

But now of this name of gentilesse, what man is it that ne may wele seen how veyn and how flyttynge a thyng it is? For yif the name of gentilesse be referred to renoun and cleernesse of lynage, thanne is gentil name but a foreyne thyng (that is to seyn to hem that gloryfien hem of hir lynage). [755] For it semeth that gentilesse be a maner preisyng that cometh of the dissertes of auncestres; and yif preisyng make gentilesse, thanne mote they nedes ben gentil that been preysed. For whiche thing it folweth that yif thou ne have no gentilesse of thi-self (that is to seyn prys that cometh of thy deserte), foreyne gentilesse ne maketh the nat gentil. But

751. as I seide . . . that, cp. 713.

753. I ne trowe nat, etc., due to 'ne . . . quidem' in 'popularem gratiam ne commemoratione quidem dignum puto.'

certes yif ther be ony good in gentilesse, I trowe it be al only this, that it semeth as that a maner necessite be imposed to gentil men for that thei ne schulde nat owtrayen or forlyven fro the vertus of hir noble kynrede.

'Omne hominum genus in terris.'—
Metrum 6

Alle the lynage of men that ben in erthe ben of semblable byrthe; on allone is fadir of thynges, on allone mynystreth alle thynges. He yaf to the sonne his bemes, he yaf to the moone hir hornes, he yaf the men to the erthe, he yaf the sterres to the hevene. [760] He encloseth with membres the soules that comen from his heye sete. Thanne comen alle mortel folk of noble seed. Why noysen ye or bosten of your eldres? For yif thou loke youre bygynnyng, and god your auctour and yowr makere, thanne nis ther none for-lyved wyght or on-gentil but if he norysche his corage un-to vices and foreleten his propre byrthe.

'Quid autem de corporibus.'—Prosa 7

But what schal I seye of delycles of body, of which delices the desirynge ben ful of anguyssch, and the fulfyllynge of hem ben ful of penance? How grete seknesses and how grete sorwes unsuffrable, ryght as a maner fruyte of wykkidnesse, ben thilke delices wont to bryngen to the bodyes of folk that usen hem! Of whiche delices I not what joie mai ben had of here moevyng, [765] but this woot I wel, that who-so-ever wol remembren hym of hise luxures, he schal wel undirstonden that the issues of delices ben sorweful and sorye. And yif thilke delices mowen maken folk blisful, thanne by the same cause moten thise beestis ben clepid blisful, of whiche beestes al the entencioun hasteth to ful-

758. owtrayen or forlyven, 'degenerent' owtrayen, 'go to excess,' does not seem happy.
762. Hn. Cx. H B yif ye loke.

filie here bodily jolyte. And the gladnesse of wyf and children were an honest thyng, but it hath ben seyð that it is over-mochel ayens kynde that children han ben fownden tormentours to here fadris I not how manye; of whiche children how bytynge is every condicioun, it nedeth nat to tellen it the that hast or this tyme assayed it, and art yit now angwysshous. In this approve I the sentence of my disciple Euridippis, that seide that he that hath no children is weleful by infortune. [770]

‘*Habet hoc voluptas.*’—Metrum 7

Every delit hath this, that it angwisscheth hem with prykkes that usen it. It resemblith to this flyenge flyes that we clepen ben; that, aftir that the be hath sched hise agreable honyes, he fleeth away, and styngeth the hertes of hem that ben y-smyte, with bytynge overlonge haldyng.

‘*Nichil igitur dubium.*’—Prosa 8

Now is it no doute thanne that these weyes ne ben a maner mysledynges to blisfulnesse, ne that they ne mowen nat leden folk thider as thei byheten to leden hem. But with how grete harmes thise forseide weyes ben enlaced, I schal schewe the shortly. For-why yif thou enforcest the to assemble moneye, thou must byreven hym his moneye that hath it; [775] and yif thou wolt schynen with dignytees, thou must hysechen and supplyen hem that yvven tho dignytees; and yif thou coveytest be honour to gon byfore othere folk, thou schalt defoule thi-self thurw humblesse of axynge.

767. *jolyte*, ‘lasciviam,’ variant for ‘lacunam.’

768. *but it hath*, etc., ‘sed nimis e (Ar. extra) natura dictum est, nescio quem filios invenisse tortores,’ mi-translated. By omitting *that it is* we get a possible version.

770. H. Euripides, cp. *Androm.* 394.

772. *bytynge*, etc., ‘tenaci morsu.’

773. *to blisfulnesse* should follow *weyes*.

774. *shortly*, briefly.

Yif thou desirest power, thou schalt, be awaytes of thy subgetis, anoyously ben cast undir by manye periles. Axestow glorye? Thow shalt so bien distract by aspere thynges that thou schalt forgon sykernesse. And yif thou wolt leden thi lif in delyces, every wyght schal despysen the and for-leeten the, as thou that art thral to thyng that is right foul and brutyl (that is to seyn, servaunt to thi body). [780] Now is it thanne wel yseyn how litil and how brotel possessioun thei coveyten that putten the gooddes of the body aboven hir owene resoun. For maystow surmounten thise olifauntes in gretnesse or weichte of body? Or maistow ben strengere than the bole? Maystow ben swyftere than the tigre? Byhoold the spaces and the stablenesse and the swyft cours of the hevене, and stynt som-tyme to wondren on foule thynges. The whiche hevене certes nys nat rathere for thise thynges to ben wondryd upon, than for the resoun by whiche it is governed. [785] But the schynynge of thi forme (that is to seyn, the beaute of thi body), how swyftly passynge is it, and how transitorie!

Certes it is more flyttinge than the mutabilite of floures of the somer sesoun. For so as Aristotle telleth, that if that men hadden eyghen of a beeste that highte lynx, so that the lokynge of folk myghte percen thurw the thynges that withstonden it, who-so lokide thanne in the entrayles of the body of Alcibiades, that was ful fair in the superface withoute, it schulde seme ryght foul. And for-thi yif thou semest fair, thy nature ne maketh nat that, but the deceyvance or the feblesse of the eighen that loken. [790] But preise the gooddes of the body as mochil as evere the lyst, so that thou knowe algatis that, what-so it be (that is to seyn, of the godes of the body) whiche that thou wondrist uppon, mai ben

778. *awaytes*, ‘insidiis.’

778. *anoyously ben cast undir by*, ‘obnoxius subiacebis’ mistranslated.

787. *lynx*, *Lyneis oculis*; but Fr. ‘yeulz de lins. Aq. quotes Isidor, *de lince*.

destroied or dissolv'd by the heete of a fevere of thre dayes. Of alle whiche forseide thynges y mai reducen this schortly in a somme : that thise worldly goodes, whiche that ne mowen nat yeven that they by-heeten, ne ben nat parfite by the congregacioun of alle goodis ; that they ne ben nat weyes ne pathes that bryngen men to blisfulnesse, ne maken men to ben blisful.

'Heu que miseros tramite.'—Metrum 8

Allas ! whiche folie and whiche ignorance mysledeth wandrynge wrecchis fro the path of verray good ! Certes ye ne seke no gold in grene trees, ne ye gadere nat precyous stones in the vynes, ne ye ne hiden nat yowr gynnes in heye mountaignes to kacchen fyssche of whiche ye mai maken riche festes. [795] And if yow liketh to hunt to roos, ye ne gon nat to the foordes of the watir that highte Tyrene. And over this, men known wel the krikes and the cavernes of the see yhidde in the flodes, and known ek whiche watir is moost plenteuous of white peerlis, and known whiche watir haboundeth moost of reed purple (that is to seyn, of a maner schelle fyssche with whiche men deien purple), and known whiche strondes habounden most of tendre fysches, or of sharpe fyssches that hyghten echynnys. But folk suffren hem-selve to ben so blynde, that hem ne reccheth nat to knowe where thilke goodes ben yhidd whiche that thei coveyten, but ploungen hem in erthe, and seken there thilke good that surmounteth the hevene that bereth the steris. What preyere mai I make, that be digne to the nyce thoughtes of men ? [800] But I preie that thei coveyten rychesses and honours. So that, whanne thei han geten tho false goodes with

greet travaile, that ther-by they mowen knownen the verray goodes.

'Hactenus mendacis formam.'—Prosa 9

It suffiseth that I have schewyd hiderto the forme of fals wefulnessse, so that yif thou loke now cleerly, the ordre of myn entencioun requireth from hennes forth to schewe the verray wefulnessse.'

'For sothe,' quod I, 'I se wel now that suffisaunce may nat comen by rychesses, ne power by remes, ne reverence by dignites, ne gentillesse by glorie, ne joie be delices.'

'And hastow wel knownen the causes,' quod sche, 'whi it is ?'

'Certes me semeth,' quod I, 'that y see hem ryght as thoughc it were thurw a litil clyfte, but me were levere to knowen hem more opynly of the.' [805]

'Certes,' quod sche, 'the resoun is al redy. For thilke thyng that symply is o thyng with outen any devysiou, the errour and folie of mankynde departeth and divideth it, and mysledeth it and transporteth from verray and parfit good to godes that ben false and imparfit. But seye me this. Wenestow that he that hath nede of power, that hym ne lakketh nothyng ?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'thou seyst aryght ; for if it so be that ther is a thyng that in any partie be feblere of power, certes, as in that, it moot needes be nedy of foreyne help.'

'Ryght so is it,' quod I.

'Suffisaunce and power ben thanne of o kynde ?' [810]

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'And demestow,' quod sche, 'that a thyng that is of this manere, that is to seyn suffisaunt and mighty, oughte ben despised, or ellis that it be right digne of reverence aboven alle thynges ?'

796. *foordes*, 'Tyrrhena vada.'

797. *krikes*, inlets.

800. *What preyere*, etc., 'Quid imprecatur,' but 'Quelle priere puis je faire,' etc.

800. *nyce*, foolish.

801. *ther-by*, not in original.

802. *the verray wefulnessse*, *the* is the article.

806. *al redy*, 'promptissima.'

808. *Wenestow*, etc., rather *Wenestow that he* that ne lakketh nothyng hath nede of power ?

'Certes,' quod I, 'it nys no doute that it nys right worthy to ben reverenced.'

'Lat us,' quod sche, 'adden thanne reverence to suffisaunce and to power, so that we demen that thise thre thynges be al o thyng?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'lat us adden it, yif we wiln graunten the sothe.' [815]

'What demestow thanne,' quod sche, 'is that a dirk thyng and nat noble that is suffisaunt, reverent, and myghty; or elles that it is ryght noble and ryght cleer by celebrete or renoun? Considere thanne,' quod sche, 'as we han grauntide her-by-fore, that he that ne hath nede of no thyng and is moost myghty and moost digne of honour, if hym nedeth any cleernesse of renoun, whiche clernesse he myght nat graunten of hym-self; so that for lak of thilke cleernesse he myghte seme the feblere on any side, or the more out-cast.' (Glose. This to seyn, nay; for who-so that is suffisaunt, myghty, and reverent, clernesse of renoun folweth of the forseide thynges, so that there ne be amonges hem no difference; he hath it al redy of his suffisaunce.)

'I mai nat,' quod I, 'denye it, but I moot granten, as it is, that this thyng be ryght celebrable by clernesse of renoun and noblesse.' [820]

'Thanne folweth it,' quod sche, 'that we adden clernesse of renoun to the thre forseide thynges, so that there ne be amonges hem no difference.'

'This is a consequence,' quod I.

'This thyng thanne,' quod sche, 'that ne hath nede of no foreyne thyng, and that may don alle thynges by hise strengthis, and that is noble and honourable, nys nat that a myry thyng and a joyful?'

'But whennes,' quod I, 'that any

817. *i.e.* Consider whether he who nedes nothing and is myghty and honoured, needs fame. The *that* seems to be used as in 713.

821. *that we adden*, etc., 'ut claritudinem superioribus tribus nihil differre fateamur.' Chaucer's incorrect version is due to Fr.

822. C₂ A₁ omit *is* after *this*.

sorwe myghte comen to this thyng that is swiche, certes I mai nat thynke.'

'Thanne mote we graunten,' quod sche, 'that this thing be ful of gladnesse, if the forseide thynges ben sothe; [825] and certes also mote we graunten that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reverence, and gladnesse be oonly diverse by names, but hir substaunce hath no diversite.'

'It moot nedly ben so,' quod I.

'Thilke thyng thanne,' quod sche, 'that is oon and symple in his nature, the wikkidnesse of men departeth it and divideth it; and whanne thei enforcen hem to gete partie of a thyng that ne hath no part, thei ne geten hem neyther thilke partie that is noon, ne the thyng al hool that thei ne desire nat.'

'In whiche manere?' quod I.

'Thilke man,' quod sche, 'that seketh richesse to fleen poverte, he ne travaileth hym nat for to geten power, for he hath lever to ben dirk and vyl; [830] and eek withdraweth from hym-self manye naturel delites, for he nolde leese the moneie that he hath assembled. But certes in this manere he ne geteth hym nat suffisaunce, that power forleteth, and that moleste prikketh, and that filthe maketh out-caste, and that dirknesse hideth. And certes he that desireth oonly power, he wasteth and scattereth rychesse, and despyseth delices and eek honour that is withoute power, ne he ne preiseth glorie no thyng. Certes thus seestow wel that manye thynges failen to hym, for he hath som tyme defaute of manye necessites, and manye anguysshes byten hym; and whan he ne mai nat do tho defaults away, he for-letith to ben myghty, and that is the thyng that he moost desireth. [835] And ryght thus mai I make semblable resouns of honour, and of glorie, and of delyces; for so as every of these forseide thynges is the same that thise othere thynges ben (that is to seyn, al oon thyng), who-so that

830. *dirk and vyl*, 'villis obscurusque.'

832. *maketh out-caste*, 'abicit.'

835. C₁ A₂ II *the defaults*.

evere seketh to geten that oon of thise, and nat that othir, he ne geteth nat that he desireth.'

'What seystow thanne, yif that a man coveyte to geten alle thise thynges togidre?'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'I wolde seye, that he wolde geten hym sovereyn blisfulnesse; but that schal he nat fynde in tho thynges that I have schewed that ne mowen nat yeven that thei byheeten?'

'Certes no,' quod I. [840]

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'ne scholde men nat by no weye seken blisfulnesse in sicke thynges as men wenen that they ne mowen yeven but o thyng sengly of al that men seken?'

'I graunte wel,' quod I, 'ne no sothere thyng ne may be seyd.'

'Now hastow thanne,' quod sche, 'the forme and the causes of false wefulnesse. Now torne and flytte the eighen of thi thought, for ther shaltow seen anon thilke verray blisfulnesse that I have be-hyght the.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it is cler and opene, though it were to a blynd man; [845] and that schewedestow me ful wel a litel her byforn, whan thou enforcestest the to schewe me the causes of the fals blisfulnesse. For, but if I be begiled, thanne is thilke the verray perfit blisfulnesse that perfitly maketh a man suffisaunt, myghty, honourable, noble, and ful of gladnesse. And for thou schalt wel knowe that I have wel undirstonden thise thynges withynne myn herte, I knowe wel that thilke blisfulnesse that may verrayly yeven on of the forseyde thynges, syn thei ben alle oon—I knowe dowteles that thilke thyng is the ful blyfulnesse.'

839. *What seystow?* 'Quid igitur? inquam.' So also Fr. *yif that*, etc., is assigned to Philosophy in Obbarius' text, but early MSS. and translations take it as Chaucer does.

840. *but that schal he nat*, etc., 'num . . . reperiet,' etc., cp. 691, 710. The subject of *ne mowen* is omitted. B.'s reading, *they* for *ne*, is probably a scribe's correction.

845. Some phrase like *to the o'here part*, 'in adversum,' has probably dropped out after *thought*.

'O my nory,' quod sche, 'by this opynoun I scie thou art blisful, yif thou putte this therto that I schal seyn.'

'What is that?' quod I. [850]

Philosophie. 'Trowestow that ther be any thyng in this erthly, mortel, toublyngne thynges that may bryngne this estat?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'y trowe it nought; and thou hast schewyd me wel that over thilke good ther nys no thyng more to ben desired.'

'Thise thynges thanne,' quod sche, (that is to seyn, erthly suffysaunce, and powere, and swiche thynges) outhur thei semen lyknesse of verray good, or elles it semeth that thei yeve to mortel folk a maner of goodes that ne be nat perfyte. But thilke good that is verray and perfyte that mai thei nat yeven.' [855]

'I accorde me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'for as moche as thou hast knowen whiche is thilke verray blisfulnesse, and eek whiche thilke thynges ben that lyen falsly blisfulnesse (that is to seyn, that be deceyte semen verray goodes), now byhoveth the to knowe whennes and where thou mowe seke thilke verray blisfulnesse.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'that desire I gretly and have abyden longe tyme to heikne it.'

'But for as moche,' quod sche, 'as it liketh to my disciple Plato, in his book of *In Thymeo*, that in ryght litel thynges men schulde byseche the help of god, [860] what juggestow that be now to done, so that we may desserve to fynde the seete of thilk sovereyn good?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'y deme that we schul clepe to the fadir of alle goodes, for withouten hym is ther no thyng founded aryght.'

'Thow seyst aryght,' quod sche, and bygan anon to synge right thus:

851. *this*, these. *toublyngne*, 'caducis,' as in 357, 406.

856. *lyen*, counterfeit.

860. *In Thymeo*, rather in the *Timeus* (cp. *Tim.* 27 c.)

'O quam perpetua.'—Metrum 9

'O thou fadir, soowere and creatour of hevene and of erthes, that governest this world by perdurable resoun, that commaundest the tymes to gon from syn that age hadde bygynnyng; thou that duellest thi-selfe ay stedefast and stable, and yevest alle othere thynges to ben meved, [865] ne foreyne causes necesseden the nevere to compounde werk of floterynge matere, but oonly the forme of sovereyn good I-set with-in the withoute envye, that moevede the frely. Thou, that art althir-fayrest, berynge the faire world in thyn thought, fornedest this world to the lyknesse semblable of that faire world in thy thought. Thou drawest alle thyng of thy sovereyn ensaampler and commaundest that this world, parfytely ymakid, have frely and absolut hise parfyte parties. Thou byndest the clementis by nombres proporcionables, that the coolede thynges mowen accorde with the hote thynges, and the drye thynges with the moyste; that the fuyr, that is purest, feigh nat over-heye, ne that the hevynesse drawe nat adoun over-lowe the erthes that ben ploungid in the watris. [870] Thou knytttest togidere the mene soule of treble kynde moevynge alle thingis, and divydest it by membris accordynge; and when it is thus divyded [and] it hath assembled a moevynge in-to two rowndes, it gooth to torne ayen to hym-self, and envyrouneth a ful deep thought and turneth the hevene by semblable ymage. Thou by evenc lyke causes enhauncest the soules and the lasse lyves; and, ablynge

864. C₂ A₁ Hn. omit *soowere and*; H Cx. *sovereyne and*.

866. *frely*. Not in Latin or French.

868. *Thou drawest* . . . *ensaampler*, precedes *Thou that art*, etc., in Latin and French. Perhaps displaced by an early scribe; if so, the reading of A₁, and *commaundedest*, is correct.

869. *nombres proporcionables*, numerical proportions.

871. 'Quæ cum secta duos motum glomeravit in orbes, In semet reditura meat mentenque profundam circuit, et simili convertit imagine cælum.'

hem heye by lyghte waynes or cartes, thou sowest hem in-to hevene and in-to erthe. [875] And when thei ben convertyd to the by thi benygne lawe, thou makest hem retourne ayen to the by ayenledynge fyer. O fadir, yve thou to the thought to steyen up in-to thi streyte secte; and graunte hym to envyroune the welle of good; and, the lyght I-founde, graunte hym to fycchen the clere syghtes of his corage in the; and skatere thou and to-breke the weyghtes and the cloudes of erthly hevynesse; and schyn thou by thi bryghtnesse, for thou art cleernesse, thou art pesible reste to debonayre folk; thou thi-self art bygynnyng, berere, ledere, path and terme; to looke on the, that is our ende. [880]

'Quoniam igitur que sit.'—Prosa 10

For as moche thanne as thou hast seyn which is the fourne of good that nys nat parfit, and whiche is the forme of good that is parfit, now trowe I that it were good to schewe in what this perfeccioun of blisfulnesse is set. And in this thing I trowe that we schulde first enquire for to witen, yf that any swich maner good as thilke good that thou hast dyffynished a litel here-byform (that is to seyn sovereyn good) may be founde in the nature of thynges, for that vcyn ymagynacioun of thought desceyve us nat, and put us out of the sothfastnesse of thilke thynges that is summytted to us. But it may nat be denyed that thilke good ne is, and that it nys ryght as a welle of alle goodes. For alle thing that is cleped inparfyt is proevied inparfit be the amenusynge of perfeccioun or of thing that is parfit. [885] And herof cometh it that in every thing general, yif that men seen any thing that is inparfit, certes in thilke general ther moot bensom thing that is parfit. For yif so be that perfeccioun is don away, men may nat thinke ne say

875. *heye*, to rise.

877. *envyroune*, 'lustrare' (to look upon), Fr. 'aurouner.'

fro whennes thilke thing is that is cleped inparfyt. For the nature of thinges ne took nat hir begynnyng of thinges amened and inparfit, but it procedith of thinges that ben alle hole and absolut, and descendith so doun into uttereste thinges and in-to thinges empty and withouten fruyt. But, as I have schewid a litel here byforn that yif ther be a blisfulnesse that be freel and veyn and inparfyt, ther may no man doute that ther nys som blisfulnesse that is sad, stedefast, and parfyt.'

'This is concluded,' quod I, 'feermely and soothfastly.' [89c]

'But considere also,' quod sche, 'in whom this blisfulnesse enhabiteth. The comune accordaunce and conceyt of the corages of men proveth and graunteth that god, prince of alle thinges, is good. I'or, so as no thyng mai ben thought betere than god, it mai nat ben doutid thanne that he that no thinge nys betere, that he nys good. Certes resoun scheweth that god is so good that it proeveth by verray force that parfyt good is in hym. For yif god nys swyche, he ne mai nat be prince of alle thinges; [805] for certes som-thing possessyng in it-self parfyt good schulde be more worthy than god, and it scholde semen that thilke were first and eldere than god. For we han schewyd apertely that alle thinges that ben parfyt ben first er thynges that ben inparfit; and for-ty, for as moche as that my resoun or my proces ne go nat away withouten an ende, we owe to graunte that the sovereyn god is right ful of sovereyn parfit good. And we han establissched that the sovereyne good is verray blisfulnesse. Thanne moot it nedis be that verray blisfulnesse is set in sovereyn god.' [900]

'This take I wel,' quod I, 'ne this ne mai nat be withseid in no manere.'

'But I preye the,' quod sche, 'see now how thou mayst proeven holly and

withouthe corrupcioun this that I have seid, that the sovereyn god is ryght ful of sovereyne good.'

'In which manere?' quod I.

'Wenestow aught,' quod sche, 'that the prince of alle thynges have I-take thilke sovereyne good any-wher out of hym-self, of whiche sovereyne good men proeveth that he is ful; ryght as thou myghtest thynken that god, that hath blisfulnesse in hym-self, and thilk blisfulnesse that is in hym, were divers in substaunce? [905] For yif thou were that god have resseyved thilke good out of hym-self, thou mayst wene that he that yaf thilke good to god be more worth than is god. But I am beknowe and confesse, and that ryght dignely, that god is ryght worthy aboven alle thinges. And yif it so be that this good be in hym by nature, but that it is dyvers from him by wenyng resoun, syn we speke of god prynce of alle thynges,—feyne who so feyne mai—who was he that hath conioyned these divers thynges togidre? And cek at the laste se wel that a thing that is divers from any thing, that thilke thing nys nat that same thing fro whiche it is undirstonden to be diverse. Thanne folweth it that thilke thing that by his nature is divers from sovereyn good, that that thyng nys nat sovereyn good. [910] But certes it were a felenous cursydnesse to thinken that of hym that no thing nys more worth. For alwey, of alle thinges, the nature of hom may nat ben betere thanne his begynnyng. For whiche I mai concluden by ryght verray resoun that thilke that is begynnyng of alle thinges, thilke same thing is sovereyn good in his substaunce.'

'Thow hast seyd ryghtfully,' quod I.

'But we han graunted,' quod sche, 'that the sovereyn good is blisfulnesse.'

'That is sooth,' quod I. [915]

894. *that no thinge*, etc., i.e. to whom nothing is superior.

901. *take*, 'accipio'; Fr. 'recoif.'

904. Chaucer and one of French MSS. omit 'vel ita naturaliter habere.' Add, therefore, after *ful*; or *wenestow that he hath it naturally in himself*.

912. C₁ H Cx. A₂ *hir begynnyng*, and rightly, but probably a correction.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'moten we nedes granten and confessen that thilke same sovereyn good be god?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'y ne may nat denyen, ne withstonde the resouns purposed; and I se wel that it folweth by strengthe of the premisses.'

'Loke now,' quod sche, 'yif this be proevid yet more fermly thus that there ne mowen not ben two sovereyn goodis that ben divers among hem-self. For certes the goodis that ben divers among hem-self, that oon is nat that that othir is; thanne mowen neither of hem ben parfit, so as cyther of hem lakketh to othir. But that that nys nat parfit, men mai seen apertly that it nys not sovereyn. [920] The thinges thanne that ben sovereynly gode ne mowe by no weic be divers. But I have wel concluded that blisfulnesse and god ben the sovereyn good; for whiche it mote nedes be that sovereyne blisfulnesse is sovereyn devynite.'

'No thing,' quod I, 'nys more soth-faste than this, ne more ferme by resoun, ne a more worthy thing than god mai not ben concluded.'

'Upon these thynges thanne,' quod sche, 'ryght as these geometriens when thei han schewed her proposicions ben wont to bryngen yn thinges that thei clepen porismes or declaracions of forseide thinges, right so wol I yeve the here as a corolarie or a meede of coroune. For-why for as moche as by the getyng of blisfulnesse men ben makid blisful, and blisfulnesse is dyvinite, than is it manifest and opene that by the getyng of dyvinite men ben makid blisful. [925] Right as by the getyng of justice [men ben makid just], and be the getyng of sapience thei ben makid wise, ryght so nedes by the semblable resoun, when thei han gotten dyvinite thei ben makid goddes. Thanne is every blisful man

918. *thus that*, i.e. from the fact that.

919. *neither*, often plural in Middle-English.

924. *as*, as it were.

924. *meede of coroune*, 'loier de coroune.'

926. *men . . . just*, MSS. omit; supplied from French.

god. But certes by nature ther nys but o god; but by the participacioun of dyvinite ther ne let ne distourbeth no thyng that ther ne ben many goddis.'

'This ys,' quod I, 'a fair thing and a precious, clepe it as thou wilt, be it corolerie, or porisme, or meede of coroune, or declarynges.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'no thing nys fairere than is the thing that by resoun schulde ben addide to these forseide thinges.' [930]

'What thing?' quod I.

'So,' quod sche, 'as it semeth that blisfulnesse conteneth many thinges, it weere for to witen whether that alle these thinges maken or conioynen as a maner body of blisfulnesse by diversite of parties or membres, or elles yif any of alle thilke thinges ben swich that it acomplishe by hymself the substance of blisfulnesse, so that alle these othere thynges ben referrid and brought to blisfulnesse (that is to seyn, as to the cheef of hem).'

'I wolde,' quod I, 'that thou madest me clerly to undirstonde what thou seist, and that thou recordidest me the forseide thinges.'

'I have I not jugged,' quod sche, 'that blisfulnesse is good?' [935]

'Ys for sothe,' quod I, 'and that sovereyn good.'

'Addre thanne,' quod sche, 'thilke good that is naked [of] blisfulnesse to alle these forseide thinges. For thilke same blisfulnesse that is demed to ben sovereyn suffisaunce, thilke selve is sovereyn power, sovereyn reverence, sovereyn clernesne or noblesse, and sovereyn delyt. What seistow thanne of all these thinges, that is to seyn, suffisaunce, power, and alle these othere thinges,—ben thei thanne as membrs of blisfulnesse, or ben they reffered and brought to sovereyne good ryght as alle thinges that ben brought to the cheef of hem?'

'I undirstonde wel,' quod I, 'what

928. *let*, hindereth.

937. *of*, MSS. omit; supplied from French.

thou purposest to seke, but I desire for to herken that thou schewe it me.' [940]

'Tak now thus the discrecioun of this questiou,' quod sche; 'yif alle thise thynges,' quod sche, 'weren membris to felcite, thanne weren thei dyverse that on fro that othir. And swich is the nature of parties or of membres, that diverse membris compounen a body.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it hath wel ben schewyd here byforn that alle thise thynges ben al o thyng.'

'Thanne ben thei none membres,' quod sche, 'for elles it schulde seme that blisfulnesse were conioyned al of o membre allone; but that is a thing that mai not ben don.'

'This thing,' quod I, 'nys not doutous; but I abide to herkennen the remenaunt of the question.' [945]

'This is opene and cler,' quod sche, 'that alle othere thynges ben referrid and brought to good. For therfore is suffisaunce requerid, for it is demyd to ben good; and for-thy is power requerid, for men trowen also that it be good; and this same thing mowen we thinken and coniecten of reverence, and of noblesse, and of delyt. Thanne is sovereyn good the somme and the cause of al that oughte ben desired; for-why thilke thing that with-holdeth no good in it selve, ne semblance of good, it mai not wel in no manere be desired ne requerid. [950] And the contrarie; for though that thynges by here nature ne ben not gode, algates yif men wene that ben gode, yet ben thei desired as though that thei were verrayliche gode; and ther-fore is it that men oughte to wene by ryghte that bounte be the sovereyn fyn and the cause of alle the thynges that ben to requiren. But certes thilke that is cause for which men requiren any thing, it semeth that thilke same thing be moost desired. As thus: yf that a wyght wolde ryden for cause of hele, he ne desireth not so mochel the

moevyng to ryden, as the effect of his hele. Now thanne, syn that alle thynges ben required for the grace of good, thei ne ben not desired of alle folk more than the same good. [955] But we han grauntide that blisfulnesse is that thing, for whiche that alle thise othere thynges ben desired; thanne is it thus that certes oonly blysfulnesse is requered and desired. By whiche thing it scheweth cleerly that of good and of blisfulnesse is al on and the same substaunce.'

'I se nat,' quod I, 'wherfore that men myghten discorden in this.'

'And we han schewed that god and verray blisfulnesse is al o thing.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne mcwen we concluden sykerly, that the substaunce of god is set in thilke same good, and in noon other place. [960]

'Nunc omnes pariter venite capti.'—

Metrum 10

Cometh alle to gidre now, ye that ben ykought and ybounde with wikkide cheynes by the desceyvable delyt of erthly thynges enhabitynge in yowr thought! Her schal ben the reste of your labours, her is the havene stable in pesible quiete; this allone is the open refut to wrechcs. (Close. This to seyn, that ye that ben combyrd and disseyvid with worldly affeccions, cometh now to this sovereyn good, that is god, that is refut to hem that wolen come to hym.) Textus. Alle the thynges that the ryver Tagus yveth yow with his goldene gravelis, or elles alle the thynges that the ryver Herinus yeveth with his rede brinke, [965] or that Indus yveth, that is next the hote partie of the world, that medleth the grene stones with the white, ne scholden not

954. *moevyng to ryden*, movement of riding.

955. *for the grace*, etc., 'gratia boni.'

961. C₂ A₁ *O cometh*.

965. *Herinus*, Hermus.

966. *grene stones* . . . *white*, glossed *smaragdus* (emeralds) and *margarites* (pearls) in C₁ C₂ A₂.

940. *that*, Fr. 'que' (how).

941. *Tak now*, 'accipe.'

942. *a body*, one body.

951. Hn. ends with '*yit ben they*.'

cleren the lookynge of your thought, but hiden rather your blynde corages withynne here derkenesse. Al that liketh yow here, and exciteth and moeveth your thoughtes, the erthe hath noryschid it in his lowe caves. But the schynynge by whiche the hevene is governed and whennes that it hath his strengthe, that eschueth the derke overthrowynge of the soule; and who so evere may knowen thilke light of blisfulnesse, he schal wel seyn that the white beemes of the sonne ne ben nat cleer.' [970]

'Assencior inquam cuncta.'—Prosa II

'I assente me,' quod I, 'for alle thise thinges ben strongly bounden with ryght ferme resouns.'

'How mychel wiltow preysen it,' quod sche, 'yif that thow knowe what thilke good is?'

'I wol preyse it,' quod I, 'be pris withouten ende, yif it schal betyde me to knowe also to gedre god that is good.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'that schal I do the be verray resoun, yif that tho thinges that I have concluded a litel here byforn duellen only in hir first grauntynge.'

'Thei dwellen graunted to the,' quod I. (This to seyn as who seith, 'I graunte thi forseide conclusyouns.') [975]

'I have I nat schewed the,' quod sche, 'that the thinges that ben required of many folk ne ben not verray goodis ne parfite; for thei ben divers that on fro that othir. And so as iche of hem is lakkyng to othir, thei han no power to bryngen a good that is ful and absolut. But thanne at erste ben thei verraye good, whan thei ben gadred togidere alle in-to o forme and in-to oon werkyng. So that thilke thing that is suffisaunce, thilke same be power, and reverence, and noblesse, and myrthe. And for sothe, but yif alle thise thinges ben alle o same

thing, thei ne han not wherby that the mowen be put in the nombre of thinges that oughten ben required or desired.' [980]

'It is schewyd,' quod I, 'ne herof mai ther no man douten.'

'The thinges thanne,' quod sche, 'that ne ben none goodis whan thei ben diverse, and whanne thei bygynnen to ben al o thing, thanne ben thei goodes,—ne cometh it hem nat thanne by the getynge of unyte that thei ben maked goodes?'

'So it semeth,' quod I.

'But alle thing that is good,' quod sche, 'grauntestow that it be good by the participacioun of good, or no?'

'I graunte it,' quod I.

'Thanne mustow graunten,' quod sche, 'by semblable resoun that oon and good be o same thing; [985] for of thinges of whiche that the effect nys nat naturely divers, nedes the substaunce moot be oo same thing.'

'I ne may nat denye it,' quod I.

'Hastow nat knowen wel,' quod sche, 'that alle thing that is hath so longe his duellyng and his substaunce as longe as it is oon? But whanne it foreletith to be oon, it moot nedys deien and corrupen to gidres?'

'In whiche manere?' quod I.

'Ryght as in beestis,' quod sche, 'whanne the body and the soule ben conioyned in oon and dwellen to gidre, it is cleped a beeste; and whanne her unyte is destroyed be the disseverance the toon fro the tothir, thanne scheweth it wel that it is a deed thing, and that it nys no lenger no beeste. [990] And the body of a wyght, while it duellet in oo fourme be coniuncion of membris, it is wel seyn that it is a figure of mankynde; and yif the parties of the body ben so deyved and disseverid the ton fro the tother that thei destroyen unite, the body foreletith to ben that it was befor. And who so wolde renne in the same

970. *overthrowynge*, 'ruinas.'

972. *preysen*, prize.

973. *also to gedre*, 'aussi ensemble,' at the same time.

983. *cometh it hem*, 'leur avient'; cp. 463.

988. *to gidres*, at once.

990. *no beeste*, a beast.

991. *figure of mankynde*, 'humaine figure.'

manere be alle thinges, he scholde seen that withouten doute every thing is in his substaunce as longe as it is oon; and whanne it forletith to ben oon, it dyeth and peryssheth.'

'Whanne I considere,' quod I, 'many thinges, I se noon other.'

'Is ther any thing thanne,' quod sche, 'that, in as moche as it lyveth naturely, that forletith the talent or the appetyt of his beyng and desireth to come to deth and to corrupcioun?' [995]

'Yif I considere,' quod I, 'the beestes that han any maner nature of wyllynge and of nyllynge, I ne fynde no beeste, but if it be constreyned fro withoute-forth that forletith or despiseth the entencion to lyven and to duren; or that wole, his thanks, hasten hym to dycn. For every beest travailleth hym to defende and kepe the savacion of his lif, and eschueth deeth and destruccioun. But certes I doute me of herbes and of trees (that is to seyn, that I am in a doute of swiche thinges as herbes or trees), that ne han no felyng soules (ne no naturel werkynge servinge to appetites as beestes han), whether thei han appetyt to duellen and to duren.' [1000]

'Certes,' quod sche, 'ne therof thar the nat doute. Now looke upon thise herbes and thise trees. They wexen first in suche places as ben covenable to hem, in which places thei mowen nat sone deye ne dryen, as longe as hir nature mai defenden hem. For some of hem waxen in feeldis, and some in mountaynes, and othere waxen in mareys, and othere cleven on roches, and some wexen plentyvous in soondes; and yif any wyght enforce hym to bere hem in-to other places, thei wexen drye. [1005] For nature yeveth to every thing that that is convenient to hym, and travailleth that they ne deie nat, as longe as thei han power to duellen and to lyven. What wiltow seyn of this, that thei drawn alle here norysschynges by here rootes, ryght as thei hadden here mouthes y-plounged withynne

997. *his thanks*, voluntarily.

the erthes, and sheden be hir maryes hir wode and hir bark? And what wiltow seyn of this, that thilke thing that is ryght softe, as the marie is, that it is alwey hyd in the seete al with-inne, and that it is defended fro withoute by the stedfastnesse of wode; and that the outreste bark is put ayens the distemperaunce of the hevене as a deffendour myghty to suffren harm? And thus certes maistow wel seen how greet is the diligence of nature; [1010] for alle thinges renovelen and publysschen hem with seed y-multiplied, ne ther nys no man that ne woot wel that they ne ben ryght as a foundement and edifice for to duren, nocht oonly for a tyme, but ryght as for to dure perdurably by generacion. And the thinges cek that men wenen ne haven none soules, ne desire thei nat iche of hem by semblable resoun to kepyn that that is his (that is to seyn, that is accordyng to hir nature in conservacioun of hir beyng and enduryng)? For wherfore ellis bereth lightnesse the flaumes up, and the weyghte presseth the erthe adoun, but for as moche as thilke places and thilke moevynges ben covenable to everyche of hem? And for-sothe every thing kepeth thilke that is accordyng and propre to hym, ryght as thinges that ben contrarious and enemys corruppen hem. [1015] And yet the harde thinges, as stoncs, clyven and holden here parties togidre ryght faste and harde, and defenden hem in withstondyng that thei ne departe nat lyghtly atwyne. And the thinges that ben softe and fletyng, as is watir and eyr, thei departen lyghtly and yeven place to hem that breken or divyden hem; but natheles they retorne sone ageyn into the same thinges fro whennes thei ben arraced; but fyre fleeth and

1007. *sheden*; perhaps *sheden* should be *spredden*, 'espendent.'

1008. C₂ A₂ H Cx. *that is alwey*.

1010. *myghty*, etc., Aq. 'patiens mali, i.e. potens mala sustinere.'

1011. *renovelen* and *publysschen*, 'renouvelent' and 'propagatur.'

1012. C₂ *is hirs*, possibly right; cp. Fr. 'leur,' and pronouns of following gloss.

refuseth alle dyvisioun. I trete not now here of willeful moevynges of the soule that is knowyng, but of the naturel entencioun of thinges, as thus: [1020] ryght as we swolwen the mete that that we resseyven and ne thinke nat on it, and as we drawn our breeth in slepyng that we witen it nat while we slepyng. For certes in the beestis the love of hire lyvynges ne of hire beynges ne cometh not of the wilynges of the soule, but of the bygynnynges of nature. For certes, thurw constreynyng causes, wil desireth and embraceth ful ofte tyme the deeth that nature dredeth. (That is to seyn as thus: that a man may be constreyned so, by som cause, that his wille desireth and taketh the deeth whiche that nature hateth and dredeth ful sore.) And somtyme we seen the contrarye, as thus: that the wil of a wyght distourbeth and constreyneth that that nature desireth and requirith alwey, that is to seyn the werk of generacioun, by whiche generacioun only duelleth and is susteyned the longe durablete of mortal thinges. [1025] And thus this charite and this love, that every thing hath to hym-self, ne cometh not of the moevyng of the soule, but of the entencioun of nature. For the purveaunce of god hath yeven to thinges that ben creat of hym this, that is a ful grete cause to lyven and to duren, for whiche they desiren naturely here lif as longe as evere thei mowen. For which thou mayst not drede be no manere that alle the thinges that ben any where, that thei ne requiren naturely the ferme stablenesse of perdurable duellynge, and eek the eschuyng of destruccioun.

'Now confesse I wel,' quod I, 'that y see wel now certeynly withouten doutes the thinges that whilom semeden uncerteyn to me.'

'But,' quod sche, 'thilke thing that desireth to be and to duelle perdurably, he desireth to ben oon. [1030] For yif

that oon were destroyed certes beynges schulde ther noon duellen to no wyght.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'desiren alle thinges oon.'

'I assente,' quod I.

'And I have schewed,' quod sche, 'that thilke same oon is thilke that is good.'

'Ye forsothe,' quod I.

'Alle thinges thanne,' quod sche, 'requiren good; and thilke good thou mayst descryven ryght thus: good is thilk thing that every wyght desireth.' [1035]

'Ther ne may be thought,' quod I, 'no more verraye thing. For eyther alle thinges ben referrid and brought to noght, and floteren withouten governour, despoyled of oon as of hire propre heued; or elles, yif ther be any thing to whiche that alle thinges tenden and hyen to, that thing muste ben the sovereyn good of alle goodes.'

Thanne seide sche thus: 'O my nory,' quod sche, 'I have greet gladnesse of the, for thou hast fycched in thyen herte the myddel sothfastnesse, that is to seyn, the prykke. But this thing hath ben discoveryd to the in that thou seydest that thou wisteth not a litle her byforn.'

'What was that?' quod I.

'That thou ne wistest noght,' quod sche, 'whiche was the ende of thinges. [1040] And certes that is the thyng that every wyght desireth; and for as mochel as we han gadrid and comprehendid that good is thilke thing that is desired of alle, thanne mote we nedys confessen that good is the fyn of alle thinges.

'*Quisquis profunda.*'—Metrum II

Whoso that seketh sooth by a deep thought, and coveyteth not to ben disseyvid by no mys-weyes, lat hym rollen

1036. oon, unity.

1037. the myddel sothfastnesse, 'medie veritatis notam.' The gloss is due to note in Aq.

1039. But this thing should be But in this thing, and in that should be that that to give sense of Latin and French.

1042. mis-weyes, bypaths.

1020. C₂ H A₂ B here now.

1025. by whiche, etc., i.e. by which the permanency of mortal things is maintained.

and treden withynne hymself the lyght of his ynwarde sighte; and let hym gaderyn ayein, enclynynge in-to a compas, the longe moevynges of his thoughtes; and let hym techyn his corage that he hath enclosid and hid in his tresors, al that he compasseth or secheth fro withoute. And thanne thilke thing, that the blake cloude of errour whilom hadde y-covered, schal lighte more clerly than Phebus hymself ne schyneth. [1045] (Glosa. Who so wol seke the depe ground of soth in his thought, and wil nat ben disseyvid by false proposicouns that goon amys fro the trouthe, lat hym wel examine and rolle withynne hym-self the nature and the propertes of the thing; and let him yet eft sones examine and rollen his thoughtes by good deliberacion or that he deme, and lat hym techyn his soule that it hath, by naturel principles kyndeliche yhyd with-ynne it-self, al the trouthe the whiche ymagineth to ben in thinges withoute. And thanne al the derknesse of his mysknowynge shall seen more evidently to the sighte of his undirstondynge than the sonne ne semeth to the sighte withoute-forth.) [1050] For certes the body, bryngynge the weighte of foryetynge, ne hath nat chased out of your thought al the cleernesse of your knowyng; for certeynli the seed of soth haldeth and clyveth within yowr corage, and it is a-waked and excited by the wynde and by the blastes of doctrine. For wherfore elles demen ye of your owene wil the ryghtes, whan ye ben axid, but if so were that the norysschynge of resoun ne lyvede y-plounged in the depe of your herte? (This to seyn, how schulde men deme the sothe of any thing that wer axid, yif ther nere a rote of sothfastnesse that were y-plounged and hyd in the naturel principles, the whiche sothfastnesse lyvede within the depnesse of the thought?) And if it so be that the Muse and the

doctrine of Plato syngeth soth, al that every wyght leerneth, he ne doth no thing elles thanne but recordeth, as men recorden thinges that ben foryeten.' [1055]

'*Tunc ego Platoni inquam.*'—Prosa 12

Thanne seide I thus: 'I accorde me gretly to Plato, for thou recordist and remembrist me, these thinges yet the seconde tyme; that is to seye, first whan I loste my memorie be the contagious coniunccioun of the body with the soule, and eftsones aftirward, whan y lost it confounded by the charge and be the burdene of my sorwe.'

And thanne seide sche thus: 'Yif thou loke,' quod sche, 'first the thynges that thou hast graunted, it ne schal nat ben ryght fer that thou ne schalt remembren thilke thinges that thou seidest that thou nystist nat.'

'What thing?' quod I.

'By whiche governement,' quod sche, 'that this world is governed.'

'Me remembreth it wel,' quod I; 'and I confesse wel that I ne wyste it nat. [1060] But al be it so that I see now from afer what thou purposist, algates I desire yit to herknen it of the more pleylny.'

'Thou ne wendest nat,' quod sche, 'a litel here byform, that men schulde doute that this world nys governed by god.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'ne yet ne doute I it naught, ne I nyl nevere wene that it were to doute' (as who seith, 'but I woot wel that god gouverneth this world'); 'and I schal shortly answeren the be what resouns I am brought to this. This world,' quod I, 'of so manye and diverse and contraryous parties, ne myghte nevere han ben assembled in o forme, but yif ther ne were oon that conioyned so manye diverse thinges; [1065] and the same diversite of here

1050. *seen* (B has *be*) seems to mean 'appear'; cp. *Legend of G. W.* 156, *Gen. and Ex.* 1923 (Morris).

1058. *it ne schal nat*, etc., i.e. thou shalt not be far from remembering.

1064. *answern*, 'exponam'; Fr. 'espondrai.' read as *respondrai*.

natures, that so discorden the ton fro that other, most departen and unioynen the thinges that ben conioynid, yif ther ne were oon that contenyde that he hath conioynid and ybounden. Ne the certein ordre of nature schulde not brynge forth so ordene moevynges by places, by tymes, by doynges, by spaces, by qualites, yif ther ne were on, that were ay stedfaste duellynge, that ordeynide and disponyde these diversites of moevynges. And thilke thing, what-so-evere it be, by whiche that alle thinges ben y-maked and I-lad, y clepe hym "god," that is a word that is used to alle folk.' [1070]

Thanne seide sche: 'Syn thou feelist thus these thinges,' quod sche, 'I trowe that I have litel more to done that thou, myghty of welefulnesse, hool and sound, ne see eftsones thi contre.'

'But let us loken the thinges that we han purposed here-byforn. 'Have I nat nombred and seid,' quod sche, 'that suffisaunce is in blisfulnesse? and we han accorded that god is thilke same blisfulnesse?'

'Yis forsothe,' quod I.

'And that to governen this world,' quod sche, 'ne schal he nevere han nede of noon help fro with-oute? For elles, yif he hadde nede of any help, he ne schulde nat have no ful suffisaunce?' [1075]

'Yys thus it moot nedes be,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeyneth he be hym-self alone alle thinges?' quod sche.

'That may nocht ben denyed,' quod I.

'And I have schewyd that god is the same good?'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeigneth he alle thinges by thilke good,' quod sche, 'syn he, whiche that we han accordid to ben good, governeth alle thinges by hym-self; and he is as a keye and a styere, by whiche

1067. *Ne the certein*, etc., should be '*The ordre of nature ne schoulde not provide certeinly and unfolden so ordene*,' etc.

1077. *the same good*, 'ipsam bonum,' 'hien meismes.'

1079. *keye* 'clavus' read as 'clavis,' or 'clo,' as 'clef.'

that the edifice of this world is kept stable and withouten corruppyng?'

'I accorde me greetly,' quod I. 'And I aperceyvede a litil here byforn that thou woldest seyn thus, al be it so that it were by a thynne suspecion.' [1080]

'I trowe it wel,' quod sche; 'for, as I trowe, thou ledist now more ententyfliche thyn eyen to loken the verray goodes. But natheles the thing that I schal telle the yet ne scheweth not lesse to loken.'

'What is that?' quod I.

'So as men trowen,' quod sche, 'and that ryghtfully, that god governeth alle thinges by the keye of his goodnesse, and alle these same thinges, as I have taught the, hasten hem by naturel entencioun to come to good, ther ne may no man douten that thei ne ben governed voluntarily, and that they ne converten hem of here owene wil to the wil of here ordeynour, as thei that ben accordynge and enclynynge to here governour and here kyng.'

'It moot nedes be so,' quod I, 'for the reame ne schulde nat seme blisful yif ther were a yok of mysdrawynges in diverse parties, ne the savynge of obedient thynges ne scholde nat be.' [1085]

'Thanne is ther no thyng,' quod sche, 'that kepith his nature, that enforceth hym to gon ayen god.'

'No,' quod I.

'And yif that any thing enforcede hym to withstonde god, myghte it avayle at the laste ayens hym that we han graunted to ben almyghty be the ryght of blisfulnesse?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'al outrely it ne myghte nat avaylen hym.'

'Thanne is ther no thing,' quod sche, 'that either wole or mai with-stonden to this sovereyn good.'

'I trow nat,' quod I.

'Thanne is thilke the sovereyn good,'

1082. *scheweth*, etc., is no less evident.

1085. *yif ther were*, etc., i.e. if it were a restraining of the refractory elements and not a preserving of the harmonious ones.

quod sche, 'that alle thinges governeth strongly and ordeyneth hem softly?' [1090]

Thanne seide I thus: 'I delite me,' quod I, 'nat only in the eendes or in the somme of resouns that thou hast concluded and proved, but thilke woordes that thou usest deliten me moche more. So that, at the laste, foolis that somtyme reenden grete thinges oughten ben asschamid of hem-self.' (That is to seyn, that we foolis that reprehenden wikkidly the thinges that touchin godis governaunce, we aughten ben asschamid of our-self; as I, that seide that god refuseth only the werkis of men and ne entremittith nat of it.)

'Thow hast wel herd,' quod sche, 'the fables of the poetis, how the geauntis assaileden hevne with the goddis, but for-sothe the debonayre force of god dispoiside hem as it was worthy (that is to sey, destroyden the geauntes, as it was worthy.) [1095] But wiltow that we ioynen to-gidres thilke same resouns, for paraventure of swiche coniuncioun may sterten up som fair sparle of soth?'

'Do,' quod I, 'as the list.'

'Wenestow,' quod sche, 'that god ne be almyghty?—No man is in doute of it?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'no wyght ne douteth it, yif he be in his mynde.'

'But he,' quod sche, 'that is almyghti—ther nys no thyng that he ne may?'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'May god don evel?' quod sche.

'Nay for-sothe,' quod I.

'Thanne is evel no thing,' quod sche, 'syn that he ne may not don evel, that mai doon alle thinges.' [1100]

'Scornestow me,' quod I,—(or elles, 'Pleyestow or disseyvistow me,')—'that hast so wovven me with thi resouns the hous of Didalus, so entrelaced that it is unable to ben unlaced—thow that other-

1091. H Cx. A₂ the resouns; C₁ the inserted later (?).

1095. with the goddis, against the gods. Probably due to misreading 'ou les dieux' as 'aux diex.'

1101. Didalus, Dedalus.

while entrust ther thow issist, and other while issest ther thow entrest? Ne fooldist thou nat to-gidre (by replicacioun of wordes) a manere wonderful cercle or enviroynunge of the simplicitie devyne? For certes a litel here byforne, whanne thou bygunne at blisfulnesse, thou seidest that it is sovereyn good, and seidest that it is set in sovereyn god; and seidest that god hym-self is sovereyn good, and that good is the ful blisfulnesse; [1105] for whiche thou yave me as a covenable yifte, that is to seyn, that no wyght is blisful, but yif he be god also ther-with. And seidest eke that the forme of good is the substaunce of god and of blisfulnesse; and seidest that thilke same oon is thilke same good that is required and desired of al the kynde of thinges. And thou provedest in disputynge that god governeth alle the thinges of the world by the governmentis of bounte; and seidest that alle thinges wolen obeyen to hym; and seidest that the nature of yvel nys no thing. And thises thinges schewedest thou, naught with noone resouns y-taken fro withouten, [1110] but by proeves in cercles and homliche knowen, the whiche proeves drawnen to hem-self heer feyth and here accord everiche of hem of othir.'

Thanne seide sche thus: 'I ne scorneth the nat, ne pleie, ne disceyve the; but I have schewed the the thing that is grettest over alle thinges, by the yifte of god that we whilome prayeden. For this is the forme of the devyne substaunce, that is swiche that it ne slideth nat in-to uttreste foreyne thinges, ne ne resceyveth noone straunge thinges in hym; but ryght as Parmanydes seide in Greece of thilke devyne substaunce—he seide thus: that thilke devyne substaunce tornith the

1106. as, as it were.

1106. covenable yifte, probably misreading of 'coronable don' (correlarium).

1111. prooves in cercles, etc., 'insitis et domesticis probationibus'; in cercles is due to gloss on insitis in Aq., and known to Fr. 'conneus' (? conseus) translating 'domesticis.'

1115. Parmanydes, Parmenides.

world and the moevable cercle of thinges, while thilke devyne substance kepith itself withouten moevynge. [1115] (That is to seyn that it ne moeveth nevere mo, and yet it moeveth alle othere thinges.) But natheles, yif I have styred resouns that ben nat taken from withouten the compas of the thing of whiche we tretten, but resouns that ben bystowyd withinne that compas, ther nys nat why that thou schuldest merveillen, sith thou hast lernyd by the sentence of Plato that nedes the wordis moot nedes be cosynes to the thinges of whiche thei speken.

'Felix qui potuit.'—Metrum 12

Blisful is that man that may seen the clere welle of good! Blisful is he that mai unbynden hym fro the boondes of the hevy erthe! The poete of Trace (Orpheus), that whilome hadde ryght greet sorwe for the deth of his wyf, aftir that he hadde makid by his weeply songes the wodes moevable to renne, [1120] and hadde makid the ryveris to stonden stille, and hadde makid the hertes and the hyndes to joynen dreedles here sydes to cruel lyouns (for to herknen his song), and hadde makid that the hare was nat agast of the hound, whiche was plesed by his song; so, whanne the moste ardaunt love of his wif brende the entayles of his breest, ne the songes that hadden overcomen alle thinges ne mighten nat asswagen hir lord (Orpheus). He pleynid hym of the hevene goddis that weren cruel to hym. He wente hym to the houses of helle, and ther he tempride his blaundysschinge songes by resounynge strenges, [1125] and spak and song in wepynge al that evere he hadde resceyved and lavyd out of the noble welles of his modir (Callyope), the goddesse. And he song, with as mochel as he myghte of wepynge, and with as moche as love, that doublide his sorwe, myghte yve hym and

teche hym, and he commoevde the helle, and requyred and bysoughte by swete preyere the lordes of soules in helle of relessynge (that is to seyn, to yelden hym his wyf). Cerberus, the porter of helle, with hise thre hevedes was caught and al abasschid for the newe song. And the thre goddesses, furiis and vengeresses of felonyes, that tormenten and agasten the soules by anoy, woxen sorweful and sory, and wepyn teeris for pite. Tho was nat the heved of Ixion y-tormented by the overthrowynge wheel. [1130] And Tantalus, that was destroyed by the woodnesse of long thurst, despyseth the floodes to drynken. The foul that highte voltor, that etith the stomak or the gysler of Tycius, is so fulfild of his song that it nil eten ne tiren no more. At the laste the lord and juge of soules was moevid to misericordes, and cryede: "We ben overcomen," quod he; "yeve we to Orpheus his wif to beren hym compaignye; he hath wel y-bought hire by his faire song and his ditee. [1135] But we wolen putten a lawe in this and covenaut in the yifte; that is to seyn that, til he be out of helle, yif he loke byhynde hym, that his wyf schal comen ageyn unto us." But what is he that may yeven a lawe to loverys? Love is a grettere lawe and a strengere to hynself (thanne any lawe that men mai yyven). Allas! whanne Orpheus and his wyf weren almost at the termes of the nyght (that is to seyn, at the laste boundes of helle), Orpheus lokede abakward on Erudyce his wif, and lost hire, and was deed. This fable apertenith to yow alle, who so evere desireth or seketh to lode his thought into the sovereyn day (that is to seyn, into cleernesse of sovereyn good). [1140] For who so that evere be so overcomen that he ficche his eien in-to the put of helle (that is to seyn, who so sette his thoughtes in erthly thinges), al that evere he hath drawn of the noble good celestial he

1117. *styred*, 'agitavimus.'

1123. *ne the songes*, not even the songs.

1125. *lavyd*, 'puisie.'

1129. *by anoy*, rather *anoyous soules*, 'sontes.'

1136. *covenaut*, 'covenantances.'

1137. *men mai yyven*, one may give.

1139. *and was deed*, and she was dead.

lesith it, whanne he looketh the helles (that is to seyn, in-to lowe thinges of the ert).'

EXPLICIT LIBER TERCIVS

INCIPIT LIBER QUARTVS

'*Hec cum philosophia dignitate vultus.*'—
Prosa I

Whanne Philosophie hadde songen softly and delitably the forseide thinges kepyng the dignyte of hir cheere and the weyghte of hir wordes, I, thanne, that ne hadde nat al outrely foryeten the wepyng and the moornyng that was set in myn herte, for-brak the entencioun of hir that entendede yit to seyn some othere thinges. 'O,' quod I, 'thou that art gyderesse of verray light, the thinges that thou hast seid me hidir-to ben to me so cleer and so schewyng by the deuyne lookyng of hem, and by thy resouns, that they ne mowen nat ben overcomen. [1145] And thilke thinges that thou toldest me, al be it so that I hadde whilom foryeten hem for the sorwe of the wrong that hath ben don to me, yet natheles thei ne weren not al outrely unknown to me. But this same is namely a ryght grete cause of my sorwe: that so as the governour of thinges is good, yif that the eveles mowen ben by any weyes, or elles yif that evelis passen withouten punysschyng. The whiche thing oonly how worthy it is to ben wondrid uppon, thou considerest it wel thi-selve certeynly. But yit to this thing ther is yit another thing I-ioyned more to ben wondrid uppon: [1150] for felonye is emperisse, and floureth ful of riches, and vertu is nat al oonly withouten meedes, but it is cast undir and fortroden undir the feet of felonous folk, and it

abyeth the tormentes in stede of wikkide felouns. Of alle whiche thinges ther nys no wyght that may merveillen y-nowghe, ne compleyne that swiche thinges ben don in the reigne of god, that alle thinges woot and alle thinges may and ne wole nat but oonly gode thinges.'

Thanne seide sche thus: 'Certes,' quod sche, 'that were a greet mervelle and abayssching withouten ende, and wel more horrible than alle monstres, yif it were as thou wenest; that is to seyn, that in the ryght ordene hous of so mochel a fadir and an ordeynour of meyne, that the vesselis that ben foule and vyl schulden ben honoured and heryed, and the precious vesselis schulden ben defouled and vyl. [1155] But it nys nat so. For yif the thinges that I have concludid a litel here byforn ben kept hoole and unaraced, thou schalt wel knowe by the auctorite of god, of the whos regne I speke, that certes the gode folk ben alwey myghty and schrewes ben alwey outcast and feble; ne the vices ben nevere mo withouten payne, ne the vertus ben nat withouten mede; and that blisfulnesses comen alwey to good folk, and infortune comith alwey to wykkide folk. [1160] And thou schalt wel knowe manye thinges of this kynde, that schullen cesen thi pleyntis and strengthen the with stedfaste sadnesse. And for thou hast seyn the forme of the verray blisfulnesse by me that have whilom y-schewid it the, and thou hast knowen in whom blisfulnesse is y-set, alle thingis y-treted that I trowe ben necessarie to putten forth, I schal schewe the the weye that schal bryngen the ayen unto thyn hous; and I schal fycchen fetheris in thi thought, by whiche it mai areisen in heighte; so that, alle tribulacioun l-don away, thou, by my gyding and by my path and by my sledys, shalt mowen retourne hool and sownd in-to thi contree. [1165]

1142. *helles*, 'inferos.'

1145. C₂ Cx. A₂ *the resouns*.

1148. *yif that . . . or yif that*, i.e. how that . . . or how that.

1151. *abyeth the tormentes*, 'supplicia luit.'

1161. *sadnesse*, firmness.

1164. *fetheris*, wings.

1165. *sledys*, 'vehiculis,' 'voiturez.'

'*Sunt etenim penne volucres michi.*'—

Metrum 1

'I have, for-thi, swifte fetheris that surmounten the heighte of the hevене. Whanne the swifte thoght hath clothid it-self in tho fetheris, it despiseth the hateful erthes, and surmounteth the rowndenesse of the gret ayr; and it seth the clowdes byhynde his bak, and passeth the heighte of the regioun of the fir, that eschaufeth by the swifte moevynge of the firmament, til that he aryseth hym in-to the houses that beren the sterres, and ioyneth his weies with the sonne, Phebus, and felawshipeth the weic of the olde colde Saturnus; and he, I-maked a knyght of the clere sterre (that is to seyn, whan the thought is makid godis knyght by the sekyng of cleer trouthe to comen to the verray knowleche of god) [1170]—and thilke soule renneth by cercele of the sterres in alle the places there as the schynnyng nyght is y-painted (that is to sey, the nyght that is cloudeles; for on nyghtes that ben cloudeles it semeth as the hevене were peynted with diverse ymages of sterres). And whan the thought hath don there I-noghe, he schal forleten the laste hevене, and he schal pressen and wenden on the bak of the swifte firmament, and he schal be makid parfit of the worschipful lyght of god. There halt the lord of kynges the septre of his myght and a-temprith the governementes of the world, [1175] and the schynnyng juge of thinges, stable in hym-self, governeth the swifte wayn (that is to seyn, the circuler moevynge of the sonne). And yif thi wey ledeth the ayein so that thou be brought thider, thanne wiltow seye that that is the contre that thou requerest, of

1166. *for-thi*, C₂ A₁ *forsothe*.

1168. Ptolemy's system of the universe is here referred to.

1169. C₁ A₂ Cx. B II omit *hym*; A₁ *hir* (*soule*) is represented by the feminine pronoun after 1168 in A₁).

1170. C₂ A₁ read *that* for *whan* and omit *clere*.

1174. *worschipfullyght*, A₁ *dredfulclerenesse*.

whiche thou ne haddest no mynde—"but now I remembreth me wel, here was I born, her wol I fastne my degree (here wol I duelle)." But yif the liketh thanne to looken on the derknesse of the erthe that thou hast forleten, thanne schaltow seen that these felouns tirantes, that the wrecchide peple dredeth now, schullen ben exiled fro thilke faire contre.'

'*Tum ego pape ut magna.*'—Prosa 2

Thanne seide I thus: 'Owh! I wondre me that thou byhetist me so grete thinges. [1180] Ne I ne doute nat that thou ne maist wel performe that thou behetist; but I preie the oonly this, that thou ne tarie nat to telle me thilke thinges that thou hast moevyd.'

'First,' quod sche, 'thow most nedes knowen that good folk ben alwey strong and myghti, and the schrewes ben feble, and desert and naked of alle strengthes. And of these thinges certes everiche of hem is declared and schewed by othere. For so as good and yvel ben two contraries, yif so be that good be stedfast, thanne scheweth the feblesse of yvel al opynly; and if thou knowe clerly the freelnesse of yvel, the stedfastnesse of good is knowen. [1185] But for as moche as the fey of my sentence schal ben the more ferme and haboundant, I wil gon by the to weye and by the tothir, and I wil conferme the thinges that ben purposed, now on this side and now on that side. Two thinges ther ben in whiche the effect of alle the dedes of mankynde standeth, that is to seyn, wil and power; and yif that oon of these two failleth, ther nys nothing that may be doon. For yif that wille lakketh, ther nys no wyght that undirtaketh to done that he wol nat doon; and yif power failleth, the wil nys but in idel and stant for naught. [1190] And therof cometh it that yif thou see a

1177. *fastne my degree*, 'sistam gradum.'

1181. *that thou*, etc.; *me* is the antecedent of *that*.

1182. *naked*, 'desuner,' misread as 'desnuez.'

wyght that wolde geten that he mai not geten, thow maist nat douten that power ne failleth hym to have that he wolde.'

'This is open and cler,' quod I, 'ne it ne mai nat be denyed in no manere.'

'And yif thou se a wyght,' quod sche, 'that hath doon that he wolde doon, thow ne wil nat douten that he ne hath had power to doon it?'

'No,' quod I.

'And in that that every wyght may, in that men may holden hym myghti?' (As who seith, in so moche as man is myghty to doon a thing, in so mochel men halt hym myghti; and in that he ne mai, in that men demen hym to ben feble.) [1195]

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Remembreth the,' quod sche, 'that I have gaderid and I-schewid by forseide resouns that al the entencioun of wil of mankynde, whiche that is lad by diverse studies, hasteth to comen to blisfulnesse.'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I, 'that it hath ben schewed.'

'And recordeth the nat thanne,' quod sche, 'that blisfulnesse is thilke same good that men requiren? so that whanne that blisfulnesse is required of alle, that good also is required and desired of alle?' [1200]

'It ne recordeth me noght,' quod I, 'for I have it gretly alwey sicched in my memorie.'

'Alle folk thanne,' quod sche, 'good and eek badde, enforcen hem withoute difference of entencioun to comen to good.'

'This is a verray consequence,' quod I.

'And certein is,' quod sche, 'that by the getyng of good men ben y-makid gode.'

'This is certein,' quod I.

'Thanne geten gode men that thei desiren?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'But wikkide folk,' quod sche, 'yif

1201. H Cx. omit *gretly* (not found in Latin and French).

thei geten the good that thei desiren, thei ne mowe nat ben wikkid.' [1205]

'So is it,' quod I.

'Than so as the ton and the tothir,' quod sche, 'desiren good, and the gode folk geten good and not the wikkide folk, than is it no doute that the gode folk ne ben myghty and wikkid folk ben feble.'

'Who so that evere,' quod I, 'douteth of this, he ne mai nat considere the nature of thinges ne the consequence of resouns.'

'And over this,' quod sche, 'if that ther ben two thinges that han o same purpos by kynde, and that oon of hem pursuweth and performeth thilke same thing by naturel office, and that oother mai nat doon thilke naturel office, but folweth, by other manere than is covenable to nature, hym that accompliseth his purpos kyndely, [1210] and yit he ne accompliseth nat his owene purpos—whether of these two demestow for more myghti?'

'Yif that I coniecte,' quod I, 'that thou wilt seie, algates yit I desire to herkne it more pleynty of the.'

'Thou nilt nat thanne denye,' quod sche, 'that the moevment of goyng nys in men by kynde?'

'No for sothe,' quod I.

'Ne thou doutest nat,' quod sche, 'that thilke naturel office of goinge ne be the office of feet?'

'I ne doute it nat,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'yif that a wight be myghti to moeve, and goth uppon his feet, and another, to whom thilke naturel office of feet lakketh, enforceth hym to gone crepinge uppon his handes, whiche of these two oughte to ben holden the more myghti by right?' [1215]

'Knyt forth the remenaunt,' quod I, 'for no wight ne douteth that he that mai gon by naturel office of feet ne be more myghti than he that ne may nat.'

'But the sovereign good,' quod sche,

1206. *the ton*, etc., 'utrique,' 'li un et li autre.'

1207. *mai nat*, is not able.

1208. *han o same purpos*, have the same function to perform.

1212. *yif that*, although.

'that is eveneliche purposed to the good folk and to badde, the gode folk seken it by naturel office of vertus, and the schrewes enforcen hem to getin it by diverse covейtise of erthly thinges, whiche that nys noon naturel office to gete thilke same sovercin good. Trowestow that it be any other wise?'

'Nai,' quod I, 'for the consequence is opene and schewynge of thinges that I have graunted, that nedes good folk moten be myghty, and schrewes feble and unmyghti.' [1220]

'Thou rennist aryght byform me,' quod sche, 'and this is the jugement (that is to sein, I juge of the), ryght as this leches ben wont to hopin of sike folk, whan thei aperceyven that nature is redressed and with-stondeth to the maladye. But for I se the now al rely to the undirstondynge, I schal schewe the more thikke and contynuel resouns. For loke now, how greetly scheweth the feblesse and infirmite of wikkid folk, that ne mowen nat comen to that hir naturel entencioun ledeth hem; and yit almost thilke naturel entencioun constreyneth hem. And what were to demen thanne of schrewes, yif thilk naturel help hadde forleten hem, the whiche naturel help of entencioun goth alwey byform hem and is so gret that unnethe it mai ben overcome. [1225] Considere thanne how gret defaute of power and how gret feblesse ther is in wikkide felonous folke. (As who seith the grettere thing that is covейted and the desir nat acomplissed, of the lasse myght is he that covейteth it and mai nat acomplisse; and for-thi philosophie seith thus be sovereyn good.) Ne schrewes requeren not lighte meedes ne veyne games, whiche thei ne mai nat

folwen ne holden; but thei failen of thilke somme and of the heighte of thinges (that is to seyn sovereyn good). Ne these wrecches ne comen nat to the effect of sovereyn good, the whiche thei enforcen hem only to geten by nyghtes and dayes. [1230] In the getyng of whiche good the strength of good folk is ful wel yseene. For ryght so as thou myghtest demen hym myghty of goinge that goth on his feet til he myghte comen to thilke place fro the whiche place ther laye no weie forthere to be gon, ryght so mostow nedes demen hym for ryght myghty, that geteth and atteyneth to the ende of alle thinges that ben to desire, by-yonde the whiche ende ther nys no thing to desire. Of the whiche power of good folk men mai conclude that the wikkide men semen to be bareyne and naked of alle strengthe. For whi forleten thei vertus and folwen vices? Nys it nat for that thei ne knowen nat the godes? But what thing is more feble and more caytif than is the blyndnesse of ignorance? [1235] Or elles thei knowen ful wel whiche thinges that thei oughten folwe, but lecherie and covейtise overthroweth hem mys-torned. And certes so doth distempraunce to felde men, that ne mowen nat wrastlen ayen the vices. Ne knowen thei nat thanne wel that thei forleten the good wilfully, and turnen hem wilfully to vices? And in this wise thei ne forleten nat oonly to ben myghti, but thei forleten al outrelly in any wise for to been. For thei that forleten the comune syn of alle thinges that ben, thei forleten also therwith-al for to been. [1240] And peraventure it scholde seme to som folk that this were a merveile to scien, that schrewes, whiche that contenen the more partie of men, ne ben nat ne han no beyng; but yit natheles it is so, and thus stant this thing. For thei that ben schrewes I denye nat that they ben schrewes, but I denye, and seie simply and pleyntly, that thei ne ben nat, ne han no beyng. For

1220. *schewynge*, perhaps error for 'sewing.'

1221. *jugement*, 'jugemens' ('iudicium' read as 'iudicium').

1222. *redressed*, rather *addressed*, 'erecta.'

1224. *to that*, to that to which.

1225. C₁ A₂ H B omit *away*; C₂ *away*.

1227. *be sovereyn good*, in respect to the chief good.

1228. *games*, A₁ H *gaines*, 'præmia levia et ludicra, i.e. jocosæ.'

1236. *mys-torned*, 'transversos,' 'les en des-tourne.'

right als thou myghtest seyn of the careyne of a man, that it were a deed man, but thou ne myghtest nat symply callen it a man; so graunte I wel for-sothe that vicyous folk ben wikkid, but I ne may nat graunten absolutly and symply that thei ben. For thilke thing that with-holdeth ordre and kepeth nature, thilke thing is, and hath beinge; [1245] but what thing that failleth of that (that is to seyn, he that forleteth naturel ordre), he forleteth thilke beinge that is set in his nature. But thou wolt seyn that schrewes mowen. Certes, that ne denye I nat, but certes hir power ne desscendeth nat of strengthe, but of feblesse. For thei mowen don wikkidnesses, the whiche thei ne myghten nat don yif thei myghten duellen in the forme and in the doynge of good folk. And thilke power scheweth ful evidently that they ne mowen ryght nat. For so as I have gadrid and provoid a litil byforn that evel is nawght, and so as schrewes mowen oonly but schrewednesses, this conclusion is al cler, that schrewes ne mowen ryght nat, ne han no power. [1250] And for as moche as thou undirstonde which is the strengthe of this power of schrewes, I have diffynysched a litil her-byforn that no thing is so myghti as sovereyn good?

‘That is soth,’ quod I.

‘And thilke same sovereyn good may don noon yuel?’

‘Certes no,’ quod I.

‘Is ther any wyght thanne,’ quod sche, ‘that weneth that men mowen don alle thinges?’

‘No man,’ quod I, ‘but yif he be out of his wyt.’

‘But certes schrewes mowen don evel?’ quod sche.

‘Ye; wolde god,’ quod I, ‘that thei ne myghten don noon!’

‘Thanne,’ quod sche, ‘so as he that is myghty to doon oonly but goode thinges

mai doon alle thinges, and thei that ben myghti to doon yvele thinges ne mowen nat alle thinges, [1255] thanne is it open thing and manyfest that thei that mowen doon yvele ben of lasse power. And yit to proeve this conclusioun ther helpeth me this, that I have schewed here-byforn, that alle power is to be noumbred among thinges that men oughten requere; and I have schewed that alle thinges that oughten ben desired ben referred to good, ryght as to a maner heighte of hir nature. But for to mowen don yvel and felononye ne mai nat ben referrid to good. Thanne nys nat yvel of the nombre of thinges that oughten ben desired. But alle power aughte ben desired and required. [1260] Thanne is it open and cler that the power ne the mowynge of schrewes nis no power. And of alle thise thinges it scheweth wel that the gode folk ben certeinli myghty, and the schrewes doutelees ben unmyghty. And it is cler and opene that thilke sentence of Plato is verray and soth, that seith that oonly wise men may doon that thei desiren, and schrewes mowen haunten that hem liketh, but that thei desiren (that is to seyn, to come to sovereyn good), thei ne han no power to acomplissen that. For schrewes don that hem lyst whan, by tho thinges in whiche thei deliten, thei wenen to ateynen to thilke good that thei desiren; but thei ne geten nat ne ateyne nat therto, for vices ne comen nat to blisfulnesse. [1265]

‘*Quos vides sedere celsos.*’—Metrum 2

Who so that the coverturis of hir veyn apparailles myghte strepen of thise proude kynges, that thow seest sitten an hye in here chayeres, gliterynge in schynyng purpre, envyrowned with sorwful armures manasyng with cruel mouth, blowynge by woodnesse of herte,

1245. *with-holdeth*, retains.

1248. H Cx. A₂ B *wikkidnes*.

1249. H Cx. A₂ B A₁ *schrewedenes*.

1251. H Cx. A₂ B *understondis*.

1256. *yit*, moreover.

1261. *mowynge*, H Cx. A₂ A₁ *moeuynge*.

1267. *sorwful armures*, ‘tristis armis.’

1267. *blowynge*, panting.

he schulde seen thanne that thilke lordis berin withynne hir corages full streyte cheynes. For lecherye tormenteth hem on that o side with gredy venymes; and trowblable ire, that areyseth in hem the floodes of trowblynges, tormenteth upon that othir side hir thought; or sorwe halt hem wery and I-cawght, or slidyng and descevyng hope turmenteth hem. And therfore, syn thow seest on heved (that is to seyn, o tiraunt) beren so manye tyranyes, than doth thilke tyraunt nat that he desirith, [1270] syn he is cast doun with so manye wikkide lordes (that is to seyn, with so manye vices that han so wikkidly lordschipes over hym).

‘*Videsne igitur quanto.*’—Prosa 3

Seestow nat thanne in how greet filthe thise schrewes been I-wrapped, and with which clernesse thise gode folk schynen? In this scheweth it wel that to good folk ne lakketh nevere mo hir medes, ne schrewes ne lakken nevere mo turmentes, for of alle thinges that ben I-doon, thilke thing for which any thing is doon, it semeth as by ryght that thilke thing be the mede of that; as thus: yif a man renneth in the stadye (or in the forlonge) for the corone, thanne lith the mede in the coroune for which he renneth. [1275] And I have schewed that blisfulnesse is thilke same good for which that alle thinges ben doon; thanne is thilke same good purposed to the werkis of mankynde right as a comune mede, which mede ne may nat ben disseveryd fro good folk. For no wight as by ryght, for thennes-forth that hym lakketh goodnesse, ne schal ben cleped good. For whiche thing folk of gode maneres, hir medes ne forsaken hem never mo. For al be it so that schrewes waxen as wode as hem lyst ayein good folk, yit natheles the coroune of wise men ne schal nat fallen ne faden; [1280] for forcyne schrewed-

nesse ne bynymeth nat fro the corages of good folk hir propre honour. But yif that any wyght reioysede hym of goodnesse that he hadde taken fro withoute (as who seith, yif any man hadde his goodnesse of any other man than of hymself), certes he that yaf hym thilke goodnesse, or elles som other wyght, myghte benymen it hym. But for as moche as to every wyght his owene propre bounte yeveth hym his mede, thanne at erste schal he failen of mede whan he forletith to ben good. And at the laste, so as alle medes ben requirid for men wenen that thei ben gode, who is he that nolde deme that he that is ryght myghti of good were partices of the mede? And of what mede schal he ben gerdoned? Certes of ryght fair mede and ryght greet aboven alle medes. [1285] Remembre the of thilke noble corrolarie that I yaf the a litel here-byform, and gadre it to-gidre in this manere: so as god hymself is blisfulnesse, thanne is it cler and certain that alle gode folk ben I-made blisful for thei ben gode; and thilke folk that ben blisful it accordeth and is covenable to ben goddes. Thanne is the mede of good folk swych that no day ne schal empeiren it, ne no wikkidnesse schal derkne it, ne power of no wyght ne schal nat amenusen it, that is to seyn, to ben maked goddes. And syn it is thus (that gode men ne failen nevere mo of hir mede), certes no wise man ne may doute of the undepartable peyne of schrewes (that is to seyn, that the peyne of schrewes ne departeth nat from himself nevere mo). For so as good and yvel, and peyne and mede ben contrarie, it moot nedes ben that, ryght as we seen betyden in guerdoun of gode, that al so moot the peyne of yvel answer by the contrarie partie to schrewes. [1290] Now thanne so as bounte and pruesse ben the mede to good folk, also is schrewidnesse it-self

1268. *gredy venymes*, ‘avidis venenis.’

1269. C₁ A₂ H Cx. B *flood*.

1277. *werkis*, actions.

1281. C₂ *reioyse*, A₁ *reioyseth*.

1284. A₁ *wolde deme*; cp. 336.

1288. *that is to seyn*, etc., appositive to *mede*.

1291. *also*, so.

torment to schrewes. Thanne who so that evere is entecchid or defowled with payne, he ne douteth nat that he nys entecchid and defowled with yvel. Yif schrewes thanne wol preysen hem-self, may it semen to hem that thei ben withouten parti of torment, syn thei ben swiche that the uttereste wikkidnesse (that is to seyn wikkide thewes, which that is the uttereste and the worst kynde of schrewednesse) ne defouleth ne enteccheth nat hem oonly, but enfeceth and evenymeth hem greetly? And also loke on schrewes, that ben the contrarie partie of gode men, how gret payne felawshipith and folweth hem! [1295] For thou hast lerned a litil here-byform that alle thing that is and hath beyng is oon, and thilke same oon is good: than is this the consequence, that it semeth that al that is and hath beyng, is good. (This is to seyn as who seith that beinge and unite and goodnesse is al oon.) And in this manere it folweth thanne that alle thing that fayleth to ben good, it stynteth for to be and for to han any beyng. Wherefore it is that schrewes stynten for to ben that thei weeren. But thilke othir forme of mankynde (that is to seyn the forme of the body withoute) scheweth yit that these schrewes weren whilom men. [1300] Wherefore whan thei ben perverted and turned in-to malice certes thanne have thei for-lorn the nature of mankynde. But so as oonly bownte and prowess may enhawsen every man over othere men, than moot it nedes be that schrewes, whiche that schrewednesse hath cast out of the condicion of mankynde, ben put undir the merit and the dissert of men. Than betidith it that, yif thou seest a wyght that be transformed in-to vices, thow ne mayst nat wene that he be a man. For if he be ardaunt in avaryce, and that he be a ravynour by violence of

foreyne richesse, thou schalt seyn that he is lik to the wolf; and if he be felonows and withoute reste, and exercise his tonge to chidynges, thow schalt likne hym to the hownd; [1305] and if he be a pryve awaytour y-hid, and reioiseth hym to ravyssche be wiles, thou schalt seyn hym lik to the fox whelpes; and yif he be distempere, and quakith for ire, men schal wene that he bereth the corage of a lyoun; and yif he be dredful and fleyng, and dredith things that ne aughte nat to ben dredd, men schal holden hym lik to the hert; and yf he be slow, and astonyd, and lache, he lyveth as an asse; yif he be lyght and unstedfast of corage, and chaungith ay his studies, he is likned to briddes; and if he be ploungid in fowle and unclene luxuris, he is withholden in the foule delices of the fowle sowe. [1310] Than folweth it that he that forleteth bounte and prowess, he forletith to ben a man; syn he ne may nat passe in-to the condicion of god, he is toined in-to a beeste.

‘*Vela Naricii ducis.*’—Metrum 3

Enus, the wynd, aryved the sayles of Ulixes, duc of the cuntre of Narice, and his wandryng shippes by the see, into the ile ther-as Cerces, the faire goddess, dowlter of the sonne, duelleth, that medleth to hir newe gestes drynkes that ben touchid and makid with enchaunte-mentes. And afir that hir hand, myghti over the erbes, hadde chaunged hir gestes into diverse maneres, that oon of hem is coverid his face with forme of a boor; the tother is chaungid in-to a lyoun of the contre Marmoryke, and his nayles and his teth waxen, [1315] that oother of hem is newliche chaunged in-to a wolf, and howleth whan he wolde wepe; that

1292. *entecchid or defowled*, ‘afficitur.’

1294. *ne defouleth*, etc., ‘non afficit modo verum etiam vehementer inficit.’ Chaucer has confused *afficit* and *inficit*.

1300. *othir*, ‘reliqua,’ i.e. the human form left to them.

1304. *foreyne richesse*, another’s goods.

1305. *wiles*, *C₂ H whites*.

1306. *seyn hym lik*, pronounce him like.

1309. *astonyd*, ‘stupidus.’

1309. *studies*, purposes.

1313. *drynkes*, etc., ‘pocula tacta carmina,’ and ‘beuvages fez (facta?) par enchantemens.’

other goth debonayrely in the hows as a tigre of Inde. But al be it so that the godhede of Mercurie, that is cleped the bridde of Arcadye, hath had merci of the duc Ulixes, bysegid with diverse yveles, and hath unbownden hym fro the pestilence of his oostesse, algates the rowerys and the maryneres hadden by this I-drawen in-to hir mouthes and dronken the wikkide drynkes. Thei that weren woxen swyn, hadden by this I-chaunged hir mete of breed for to eten akkornes of ookes. Noon of hir lymes duelleth with hem hool, but thei han lost the voys and the body; [1320] oonly hir thought duelleth with hem stable, that wepeth and by-wayleth the monstuous chaungyng that thei suffren. O over lyght hand!' (As who seith: 'O feble and light is the hand of Circes the enchaunteresse, that chaungith the bodies of folk in-to beestes, to regard and to comparysoun of mutacioun that is makid by vices!') 'Ne the herbes of Circes ne ben nat myghty. For al be it so that thei mai chaungen the lymes of the body, algates yit thei may nat chaungen the hertes. For with-inne is I-hidd the strengthe and the vygour of men, in the secre tour of hir hertes, (that is to seyn the strengthe of resoun); but thilke venym of vices to-drawen a man to hem more myghtely than the venym of Circes. For vices ben so cruel that they percen and thurw passen the corage withinne; [1325] and, though thei ne anoye nat the body, yit vices wooden to destroyen men by wounde of thought.'

'Tum ego fateor inquam.'—Prosa 4

Thanne seide I thus: 'I confesse and I am a-knowe it,' quod I, 'ne I ne se nat that men may seyn as by ryght that schrewes ne ben chaunged in-to beestes by the qualite of hir soules, al be it so

1317. *Mercurie*, etc., Aq. 'sed licet numen, i.e. dietas arcadis, i.e. mercurii . . . qui dicitur ales quod,' etc. (*ales* read as *bride*).

1327. *am a-knowe it*, acknowledge it.

1327. *as by ryght*, justly.

that thei kepin yit the forme of the body of mankynde; but I nolde nat of schrewes, of whiche the thought crwel woodeth alway into destruccio of gode men, that it were leveful to hem to don that.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'ne it is nat leveful to hem, as I schal wel schewen the in covenable place. But natheles, yif so were that thilke that men wenen ben leveful to schrewes were by-nomyn hem, so that they ne myghte nat anoyen or doon harm to gode men, certes a gret partice of the payne to schrewes scholde ben allegged and releved. [1330] For al be it so that this ne seme nat credible thing peraventure to some folk, yit moot it nedes be that schrewes ben more wrecches and unsely, when thei mai doon and performe that thei coveyten, than yif that thei ne myghte nat acomplissen that thei coveiten. For yif it so be that it be wrecchidnesse to wilne to doon yvel, thanne is more wrecchidnesse to mowe don yvel, withoute whiche mowynge the wrecchid wil scholde langwisse withouten effect. Thanne syn that everiche of these thinges hath his wrecchidnesse (that is to seyn, wil to don yvel and power to don yvel), it moot nedes be that thei (schrewes) ben constreyned by thre unselynesses, that wolen, and mowen, and performen felonies and schrewednesses.' [1335]

'I acorde me,' quod I; 'but I desire gretly that schrewes losten sone thilke unselynesses, that is to seyn, that schrewes weren despoyled of mowynge to don yvel.'

'So schollen thei,' quod sche, 'sonnere peraventure than thou woldest, or sonnere than they hem-selve wene. For ther nis no thing so late, in so schorte bowndes of this lif, that is long to abyde, nameliche

1335. *thre*, C₂ H Cx. *the*, A₂ *theyr*.

1335. *unselynesses*, B H Cx. A₂ *unselynesse*.

1336. B H Cx. *unselynesse*; *thilke* is Fr. 'ceste' ('hoc'), which refers to the last-named of the three misfortunes.

1337. *wene*. A₁ adds to *lakken mowynge to done yvel*, which is in Latin but not in French.

1338. *late*, slow moving.

1338. *to abyde*, gerundive, i.e. that one has long to wait for it.

to a corage immortal. Of whiche schrewes the grete hope and the heye compassynges of schrewednesses is ofte destroyed by a sodeyn ende, or thei ben war; and that thing establisseth to schrewes the ende of hir schrewednesses. [1340] For yf that schrewednesse makith wrecchis, than mot he nedes ben moost wrecchide that lengest is a schrewe. The whiche wikkide schrewes wolde I demen althermost unsely and kaytifs, yif that hir schrewednesse ne were fynissched at the leste weye by the owtreste deth; for yif I have concluded soth of the unselynesse of schrewednesse, thanne schewith it clerly that thilke wrecchidnesse is withouten ende the whiche is certein to ben perldurable.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'this conclusion is hard and wondirful to graunte; but I knowe wel that it accordeth moche to the thinges that I have grauntid herebiforn.'

'Thou hast,' quod sche, 'the ryght estimacion of this. [1345] But who so evere wene that it be an hard thing to accorde hym to a conclusioun, it is ryght that he schewe that some of the premysses ben false, or elles he mot schewe that the collacioun of proposicions is nat spedful to a necessarie conclusioun; and yif it ne be nat so, but that the premisses ben y-graunted, ther nys nat why he scholde blame the argument. For this thing that I schal telle the now ne schal nat seme lesse wondirful, but of the thingis that ben taken also it is necessarie.' (As who scith, it folweth of that which is purposed byforn.)

'What is that?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'that is that thise wikkid schrewes ben more blisful, or elles lasse wrecches, that abyen the tormentes that thei han desservid, than if no peyne of justice chastisede hem. [1350] Ne this ne seie I nat now for that any man myghte thinke that the maneris of schrewes ben coriged and chastised by vengeaunce and thei ben brought to the

ryghte weye by the drede of the torment, ne for that they yeven to other folk ensample to fleen fro vices; but I undirstonde yit in another manere that schrewes ben more unsely whan thei ne ben nat punyssched, al be it so that ther ne be hadde no resoun or lawe of correccioun, ne noon ensample of lokynge.'

'And what manere schal that be,' quod I, 'other than hath ben told herbyforn?'

'Have we nat thanne graunted,' quod sche, 'that good folk ben blisful and schrewes ben wrecches?'

'Yis,' quod I. [1355]

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'yif that any good were added to the wrecchidnesse of any wyght, nis he nat more blisful than he that ne hath no medlynge of good in his solitarie wrecchidnesse?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'And what seistow thanne,' quod sche, 'of thilke wrecche that lakketh allegoodes, (so that no good nys medlyd in his wrecchidnesse,) and yit over al his wikkidnesse, for which he is a wrecche, that ther be yit another yvel anexed and knyht to hym—schal nat men demen hym more unsely thanne thilke wrecche of whiche the unselynesse is relevid by the participacioun of som good?'

'Why sholde he nat?' quod I.

'Thanne certes,' quod sche, 'han schrewes, whan thei ben punyschid, somewhat of good anexid to hir wrecchidnesse, [1360] that is to seyn, the same peyne that thei suffren, which that is good by the resoun of justice; and whanne thilke same schrewes ascapen withouten torment, than han they somewhat more of yvel yit over the wikkidnesse that thei han don, that is to seyn, defaute of peyne, whiche defaute of peyne thou hast grauntid is yvel for the disserte of felonye?'

'I ne may nat denye it,' quod I.

'Moche more thanne,' quod sche, 'ben

^{1354.} *ensample of lokynge*, example for consideration. But perhaps read *lokynge of ensample* as in Latin and French.

schrewes unsely whan thei ben wrongfully delivred fro peyne, thanne whan thei ben punyschid by ryghtful vengeaunce. But this is opene thing and cleer, that it is ryght that schrewes ben punyschid, and it is wikkidnesse and wrong that thei escapen unpunyschid.' [1365]

'Who myghte denye that?' quod I.

'But,' quod sche, 'may any man denye that al that is ryght nis good, and also the contrarie, that al that is wrong is wikke?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'thise thinges ben clere ynowe, and that we han concluded a lytel here-byfor. But I preye the that thou telle me, yif thou accordest to leten no torment to the soules afir that the body is ended by the deeth?' (This is to seyn, 'Undirstondestow aught that soules han any torment afir the deeth of the body?')

'Certes,' quod sche, 'ye, and that ryght greet. Of whiche soules,' quod sche, 'I trowe that some ben tormented by asprenesse of peyne, [1370] and some soules, I trowe, ben exercised by a purgyng mekenesse; but my conseil nys nat to determyne of thise peynes. But I have travailed and told yit hider-to for thou scholdest knowe the mowyng of schrewes, whiche mowyng the semeth to ben unworthy, nis no mowyng; and ek of schrewes, of whiche thou pleynedest that they ne were nat punysshid, that thou woldest seen that thei ne were nevere mo withouten the tormentes of hir wikkidnesse; and of the licence of mowyng to don yvel that thou preyedest that it myghte sone ben ended, and that thou woldest fayn lernen that it ne sholde nat longe endure; and that schrewes ben more unsely yif thei were of lengere duryng, and most unsely yif thei weren perdurable. [1375] And afir this I have

schewyd the that more unsely ben schrewes whan thei escapen withouten hir ryghtful peyne, thanne whan thei ben punyschid by ryghtful veniaunce; and of this sentence folweth it that thanne ben schrewes constreyned at the laste with most grevous torment, whan men wene that thei ne ben nat punysshid.'

'Whan I considere thi resouns,' quod I, 'I ne trowe nat that men seyn any thing more verrayly. And yif I turne ayein to the studies of men, who is he to whom it sholde seme, that he ne scholde nat oonly leven thise thinges, but ek gladly herkne hem?'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'so it is. [1380] But men may nat, for they have hir eien so wont to the derknesse of erthly thinges that they ne may nat lyften hem up to the light of cler sothfastnesse, but thei ben lyk to briddes of whiche the nyght lightneth hir lokyng and the day blendith hem. For whan men loke nat the ordre of thinges, but hir lustes and talentes, they wene that either the leve or the mowyng to don wikkidnesse, or elles the scapyng withouten peyne be weleful. But considere the jugement of the perdurable lawe. For yif thou conferme thi corage to the beste thinges, thou ne hast noon nede of no juge to yeven the prys or mede; for thou hast joyned thyself to the most excellent thing. And yif thou have enclyned thi studies to the wikkide thinges, ne seek no foreyne wreker out of thyself; for thou thyself hast thrist thyself in-to wikke thinges: [1385] ryght as thou myghtest loken by diverse tymes the fowle erthe and the hevne, and that alle othere thinges stynten fro withoute (so that thou nere neyther in hevne ne in erthe, ne saye no thyng more); thanne scholde it semen to the, as by oonly resoun of lokyng, that thou

1367. C₁ H Cx. omit *a lytel*.

1369. *This is*, C₁ A₁ *This*, Cx. *That is*.

1371. *purgynge mekenesse*, 'purgatoria clementia.'

1374. *and that thou woldest*, etc., should be *that thou woldest lernen*, etc. One of the French MSS. has the same mistake.

1382. C₁ H *hir talentes*.

1385. H Cx. A₁ B A₁ *wicked thinges*.

1386. *ryght as*, just as if.

1386. *and that*, that serves to repeat the preceding particle.

1386. *stynten*, preterite.

1386. C₁ H Cx. A₂ A₁ omit *nere . . . erthe*.

were now in the sterres, and now in the erthe. But the peple ne lokith nat on these thinges. What thanne? Schal we thanne approchen us to hem that I have schewed that thei ben lyke to beestes? And what wyltow seyn of this: yif that a man hadde al forlorn his syghte, and hadde foryeten that he evere sawhe, and wende that no thing ne faylede hym of perfeccioun of mankynde; now we that myghten sen the same thinges—wolde we nat wene that he were bynd? [1390] Ne also ne accordith nat the peple to that I schal seyn, the whiche thing is sustenyd by as stronge foundementes of resouns, that is to seyn, that more unsely ben they that doon wrong to othere folk, than they that the wrong suffren.'

'I wolde here thilke same resouns,' quod I.

'Denyestow,' quod sche, 'that all schrewes ne ben worthy to han torment?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'But,' quod sche, 'I am certein by many resouns that schrewes ben unsely.'

'It accordeth,' quod I.

'Thanne ne dowtestow nat,' quod sche, 'that thilke folk that ben worthy of torment, that they ne ben wrecches?' [1395]

'It accordeth wel,' quod I.

'Yif thou were thanne I-set a juge or a knowere of thinges, whethir trowestow that men scholden tormenten, hym that hath don the wrong or elles hym that hath suffred the wrong?'

'I ne doute nat,' quod I, 'that I nolde doon suffisaunt satisfaccioun to hym that hadde suffrid the wrong, by the sorwe of hym that hadde doon the wrong.'

'Thanne semeth it,' quod sche, 'that the doere of wrong is more wrecche than he that hath suffrid the wrong?'

'That folweth it wel,' quod I.

'Than,' quod sche, 'by these causes and by othere causes that ben enforced by the same roote, that filthe or synne be

the propre nature of it maketh men wrecches; and it scheweth wel that the wrong that men doon nis nat the wrecchidnesse of hym that resceyveth the wrong, but wrecchidnesse of hym that dooth the wrong. [1400] But certes,' quod sche, 'thise oratours or advocattes don al the contrarie; for thei enforcen hem to com-moeve the juges to han pite of hem that han suffrid and receyved the thinges that ben grevous and aspre, and yit men scholden more ryghtfully han pite of hem that doon the grevances and the wronges: the whiche schrewes it were a more covenable thing that the accusours or advocattes, nat wrooth but pytous and debonayre, ledden the schrewes that han don wrong to the judgement, ryght as men leden syke folk to the leche, for that thei sholden seken out the maladyes of synne by torment. And by this covenant, cyther the entent of the deffendours or advocates sholde fayle and cesen in al, or elles, yif the office of advocates wolde betre profiten to men, it scholde be torned into the halyte of accusacioun. [1405] (That is to seyn thei scholden accuse schrewes, and nat excusen hem.) And eek the schrewes hem-self, yif it were lefeful to hem to seen at any clifte the vertu that thei han foreten, and sawen that they scholden putten adoun the filthes of hir vices by the tormentes of peynes, they ne aughten nat, ryght for the recompensacioun for to geten hem bounte and prowesse whiche that thei han lost, demen ne holden that thilke peynes weren tormentes to hem; and eek thei wolden refuse the attendaunce of hir advocattes, and taken hem-self to hir juges and to hir acqusours. For whiche it betydeh that, as to the wise folk, ther nis no place y-leten to hate (that is to seyn that hate ne hath no place among wise men); for no wyght nil haten gode men, but yif he were over mochel a

1390. *wolde we nat*, 'num videntes eadem cæcos putaremus?' Chaucer follows the French in taking 'videntes' with 'putaremus.'

1398. *That foloweth it wel*, 'ce s'ensuit bien.'

1399. *that filthe*, etc., in Latin and French

depends on *roote* ('radice'). Omitting *and* before *it scheweth* the sense becomes clear.

1405. C₁ A₂ H Cx. B omit *deffendours* or and *sholde fayle and*.

fool, and for to haten schrewes it nis no resoun. [1410] For ryght so as langwissynge is maladye of body, ryght so ben vices and synne maladye of corage; and so as we ne deme nat that they that ben sike of hir body ben worthy to ben hated, but rather worthy of pite; wel more worthy nat to ben hated, but for to ben had in pite, ben thei of whiche the thoughtes ben constreyned by felonous wikkidnesse, that is more crwel than any langwissynge of body.

'Quid tantos Iuvat.'—Metrum 4

What deliteth yow to exciton so grete moevynges of hatredes, and to hasten and bysien the fatal disposicioun of your deth with your propre handes (that is to seyn, by batayles or kontek)? For yif ye axen the deth, it hasteth hym of his owene wil, ne deth ne taryeth nat his swifte hors. [1415] And the men that the serpentis, and the lyoun, and the tigre, and the bere, and the boor, seken to sleen with hir teeth, yit thilke same men seken to sleen everiche of hem oothir with swerd. Lo, for hir maneres ben diverse and discordaunt, thei moeven unryghtful oostes and cruel batayles, and wilnen to perise by entrechaungynge of dartes! But the resoun of cruelte nis nat i-nowhe ryghtful. Wiltow thanne yelden a covenable gerdoun to the dissertes of men? Love ryghtfully good folk, and have pite on schrewes.

'Hic ego video inquam.'—Prosa 5

'Thus se I wel,' quod I, 'eyther what blisfulnesse or elles what unselynesse is establisshid in the dissertes of gode men and of schrewes. [1420] But in this ilke fortune of peple I se somewhat of good and somewhat of yvel. For no wise man hath nat levere ben exiled, pore and nedy

1414. *What*, why.

1414. *hasten and bysien*, 'haster' and 'solicitare.'

1415. *hors*, horses.

1416. *serpentes*, rather 'serpent.'

1421. *fortune of peple*, 'fortuna populari.'

and nameles, thanne for to duellen in his cyte, and flouren of rychesses, and be redowtable by honour and strong of power. For in this wise more clerly and more witnesfully is the office of wise men y-treted, whanne the blisfulnesse and the pouste of gouvernours is, as it were, I-schadde among peples that ben neighbors and subgites; syn that namely prisown, lawe, and thise othere tormentes of laweful peynes ben rather owed to felonous citezeins, for the whiche felones citezeens the peynes ben establisshid than for good folk.' [1425]

'Thanne I merveile me gretely,' quod I, 'why that the thinges ben so mys-entrenchauged that tormentes of felonies pressen and confounden good folk, and schrewes ravyschen medes of vertu (and ben in honours and in gret estates). And I desire eek for to witen of the what semeth the to be the resoun of this so wrongful a confusioun; for I wolde wondre wel the lasse, yif I trowede that alle these thinges weren medlede by fortunes hap. But now hepih and encreseth myn astonyenge god governour of thinges, that, so as god yeveth ofte tymes to gode men godes and myrthes, and to schrewes yvelis and aspre thinges, and yeveth ayeinward to good folk hardennesses, and to schrewes he graunteth hem hir wil and that they desiren— [1430] what difference thanne may ther be bytween that that god doth and the hap of fortune, yif men ne knowe nat the cause why that it is?'

'Ne it nis no merveile,' quod sche, 'thowh that men wenen that ther be somewhat foolissh and confus, whan the resoun of the ordre is unknowe. But although that thou ne knowe nat the cause of so gret a disposicioun, natheles for as inoche as god the gode governour atempreth and governeth the world, ne doute the nat that alle thinges ne ben don aryght.'

1424. *wise men*, rather *wisdom*, 'sapientie.'

1424. *subgites* not in Latin or French.

1429. *that, so as god*, etc., who, since he, etc.

'*Si quis Arcturi sidera.*'—Metrum 5

'Who so that ne knowe nat the sterres of Arctour, y-torned neygh to the sovereyne centre or poynt (that is to seyn y-torned neygh to the sovereyne pool of the firmament), and wot nat why the sterre Boetes passeth orgadareth his waynes, and drencheth his late flaumes in the see, [1435] and whi that Boetes, the sterre, unfooldeth hise overswifte arysynges, thanne schal he wondryn of the lawe of the heye eyr; and eek yif that he knowe nat why that the hornes of the fulle mone waxen pale and infect by bowndes of the derk nyght, and how the mone derk and confus discovereth the sterres that sche hadde covered by hir clere vysage. The comune errour moeveth folk, and maketh wecry hir basyns of bras by thikke strokes. (That is to seyn, that ther is a maner peple that highte Coribandes, that wenen that whan the mone is in the eclips that it be enchanted, and therefore for-to rescowe the mone thei betyn hir basyns with thikke strokes.) Ne no man ne wondreth whanne the blastes of the wynd Chorus beten the strondes of the see by quakyng floodes; [1440] ne no man ne wondreth whan the weichte of the snowh, I-hardid by the cold, is resolvyd by the brennyng hete of Phebus, the sonne; for her seen men redily the causes. But the causes y-hidd (that is to seyn, in hevenc) trowblen the brestes of men. The moevable peple is astoned of alle thinges that comen seelde and sodeynly in our age; but yif the trubly errour of our ignoraunce departed fro us, so that we wisten the causes why that swiche thinges bytyden, certes thei scholde cesen to seme wondres.'

'*Ita est inquam.*'—Prosa 6

'Thus it is,' quod I. 'But so as thou hast yeven or byhyght me to unwrappen

1434. *sterres of Arctour*, 'Arcturi sidera,' i.e. *Ursa Major*.

1435. *passeth or gadreth*, 'legat'; *gadareth* is incorrect. Boetes apparently passes *Ursa Major*.

1438. *maketh*, they make (*folk* is singular).

1439. *Coribandes*, not in Latin; Fr. 'li coribant.'

the hidde causes of thinges, and to discovere me the resouns covered with derkenes, I preie the that thou devyse and juge me of this matere, and that thou do me to undirstonden it. For this miracle or this wonder trowbleth me ryght gretly.'

And thanne sche, a litel what smylinge, seide: [1445] 'Thou clepist me,' quod sche, 'to telle thing that is gretteste of alle thingis that mowen ben axed, and to the whiche questioun unnethes is ther aught I-nowgh to laven it. (As who seith, unnethes is ther suffisauntly any thing to answeren parfitly to thy questioun.) For the matere of it is swich, that whan o doute is determined and kut away, ther waxen othere doutes withoute nombre, ryght as the hevedes wexen of Idre (the serpent that Hercules slowh). Ne ther ne were no manere ne noon ende, but if that a wyght constreynede tho doutes by a ryght lifyl and quyk fir of thought (that is to seyn, by vigour and strengthe of wit). For in this matere men weren wont to maken questiouns of the symplecite of the purveance of god, and of the ordre of destyne, and of sodeyn hap, and of the knowyng and predestinacioun devyne, and of the liberte of fre wil; [1450] the whiche thinges thou thi-self aperceyvest wel of what weichte thei ben. But for as moche as the knowyng of these thinges is a maner porcioun of the medycyne to the, al be it so that I have litil tyme to doon it, yit natheles y wol enforcen me to schewe somewhat of it. But although the norysynges of dite of musyk deliteth the, thou most suffren and forberen a litel of thilke delit, whil that I weve to the resouns y-knyt by ordre.'

'As it liketh to the,' quod I, 'so do.'

Tho spak sche ryght as by an other bygynnyng, and seide thus: 'The engendryng of alle thinges,' quod sche, 'and alle the progressiouns of muable nature, and al that moeveth in any manere, taketh hise causes, his ordre, and his formes, of the stableness of the devyne thought. [1455] And thilke devyne thought

1453. *dite of musyk*, 'musici carminis.'

that is I-set and put in the tour (that is to seyn, in the heighte) of the simplicité of god, stablissith many maner gises to thinges that ben to done; the whiche manere whan that men looken it in thilke pure clenness of the devyne intelligence, it is y-cleped purveaunce; but whanne thilke manere is referred by men to thinges that it moeveth and disponyth, than of olde men it was clepyd destyne. The whiche thinges yif that any wyght loketh wel in his thought the strengthe of that oon and of that oother, he schal lyghtly mowen seen that thise two thinges ben dyvers. For purveaunce is thilke devyne resoun that is establissed in the sovereyn prince of thinges, the whiche purveaunce disponith alle thinges; but destyne is the disposicioun and ordenance clyvyng to moevable thinges, by the whiche disposicion the purveaunce knytteth alle thingis in hir ordres; [1460] for purveaunce enbraceth alle thinges to hepe, al-thoghe that thei ben diverse and although thei ben infinit. But destyne certes departeth and ordeyneth alle thinges singularly and devyded in moevynges, in places, in formes, in tymes. As thus: lat the unfoldyng of temporel ordenaunce, assembled and oonyd in the lokinge of the devyne thought, be cleped purveaunce; and thilke same assemblynge and oonyng, devyded and unfolden by tymes, lat that ben called destyne. And al be it so that thise thinges ben diverse, yit natheles hangeth that oon of that oother; for-whi the ordre destynal procedith of the simplicité of purveaunce. [1465] For ryght as a werkman that aperceyveth in his thought the forme of the thing that he wol make, and moeveth the effect of the work, and ledith that he hadde lookid byforn in his thought symplely and presently, by temporel ordenaunce; certes ryght so god disponith in his purveaunce singularly and stablye the thinges that ben to doone; but he amyni-

streth in many maneris and in diverse tymes by destyne thilke same thinges that he hath disponyd. Thanne, whethir that destyne be exercised outhir by some devyne spirites, servantes to the devyne purveaunce, or elles by some soule, or elles by alle nature servyng to god, or elles by the celestial moevynges of sterres, or elles by vertu of aungelis, or elles by divers subtilite of develis, or elles by any of hem, or elles by hem alle; the destinal ordenaunce is y-woven and acomplissid. Certes it is openething that the purveaunce is an unmoevable and symple forme of thinges to doone; [1470] and the moevable bond and the temporel ordenaunce of thinges whiche that the devyne symplité of purveaunce hath ordeyned to doone, that is destyne. For whiche it is that alle thinges that ben put undir destyne ben certes subgites to purveaunce, to whiche purveaunce destyne itself is subgit and under. But some thinges ben put undir purveaunce, that surmounten the ordenance of destyne; and tho ben thilke that stablye ben I-fyechid neyghe to the first godhede. They surmounten the ordre of destynal moevablete. For ryght as cerklis that tornen aboute a same centre or aboute a poynt, thilke cerkle that is innerest or most withinne ioyneth to the symplesse of the myddle, [1475] and is, as it were, a centre or a poynt to that othere cerklis that tornen abouten hym; and thilke that is utterest, compased by a largere envyrownynge, is unfolden by largere spaces, in so moche as it is ferthest fro the myddel symplité of the poynt; and yif ther be any thing that knytteth and felawshipeth hym-self to thilke myddel poynt, it is constreyned in-to simplicity (that is to seyn, into unmoevablete), and it ceseth to ben schad and to fleten diversely. Ryght so, by semblable resoun, thilke thing that departeth ferrest fro the first thought of god, it is unfolden and summittid to grettere bondes of destyne; and in so moche is the thing more fre and laus fro destyne, as it axeth and hooldeth hym neer to thilke centre of thingis (that

1458. of olde men, i.e. by the ancients.

1460. C₁ B A₂ H Cx. add *certes* before *destyne*.

1464. *be cleped*, C₂ A₁ is.

1467. *ledith* . . . by temporel ordenaunce, through processes in time.

is to seyn, god) ; [1480] and yif the thing clyveth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of god and be withoute moevynge, certes it surmounteth the necessite of destyne. Thanne ryght swich comparysoun as is of skillynge to undirstondyng, and of thing that ys engendrid to thing that is, and of tyme to eternite, and of the cercle to the centre ; ryght so is the ordre of moevable destyne to the stable simplicitie of purveaunce. Thilke ordenaunce moveth the hevene and the sterres, and atemprith the elementes to-gidre amonges hem-self, and transformeth hem by entrechaungeable mutacioun. And thilke same ordre neweth ayein alle thinges growynge and fallynge adoun, by semblable progressions of sedes and of sexes (that is to seyn, mal and femele). [1485] And this ilke ordre constreyneth the fortunes and the dedes of men by a bond of causes nat able to ben unbownde ; the whiche destynal causes, whan thei passen out of the bygynnynges of the unmoevable purveaunce, it moot nedes be that thei ne be nat mutable. And thus ben the thinges ful wel I-governed yif that the simplicitie duellynge in the devyne thoght scheweth forth the ordre of causes unable to ben I-bowed. And this ordre constreyneth by his propre stablete the moevable thingis, or elles thei scholden fleten folyly. For whiche it es that alle thingis semen to ben confus and trouble to us men, for we ne mowen nat considere thilke ordenaunce. [1490] Natheles the propre maner of every thing, dressynge hem to gode, disponith hem alle ; for ther nys no thing doon for cause of yvel, ne thilk thing that is doon by wikkid folk nys nat doon for yvel, the whiche schrewes, as I have schewed ful plentlyously, seken good, but wikkid error mystorneth hem ; ne the ordre comynge fro the poynt of sovereyn good ne declyneth nat fro his bygynnyng.

1480. C₁ A₂ H Cx. to god.

1482. *skillynge*, 'ratiocinatio.'

1485. *sexes*, Fr. 'sexes,' 'fettum' confused with *seus* (s.r.v.s).

1487. *whan thei passen*, 'cum' causal construed as 'cum' temporal.

1492. *poynt*, centre.

But thou mayst seyn, "What unreste may ben a worse confusioun than that gode men han som tyme adversite and som tyme prosperite, and schrewes also han now thingis that they desiren and now thinges that thei haten?" Whethir men lyven now in swich holnesse of thought (as who seith, ben men now so wyse) that swiche folk as thei demen to ben gode folk or schrewes, that it moste nedes, ben that folk ben swiche as thei wenen? But in this manere the domes of men discorden, that thilke men that som folk demen worthy of mede, other folk demen hem worthy of torment. [1495] But lat us graunten, I pose, that som man may wel demen or knowen the good folk and the badde ; may he thanne knowen and seen thilke innereste atempaunce of corages as it hath ben wont to ben seyd of bodies? (As who seith, may a man speken and determinen of atempaunce in corages, as men were wont to demen or speken of complexions and atempaunces of bodies?) Ne it ne is nat an unlike miracle to hem that ne knowen it nat (as who seith, but it is lik a mervayle or miracle to hem that ne knowen it nat) whi that swete thinges ben covenable to some bodies that ben hole, and to some bodies hyttre thinges ben covenable ; [1500] and also why that some syk folk ben holpen with lyghte medicynes, and some folk ben holpen with sharpe medicynes. But natheles the leche, that knoweth the manere and the atempaunce of hele and of maladye, ne mervyleth of it no-thing. But what othir thing semeth hele of corages but bounte and prowess? And what othir thing semeth maladye of corages but vices? Who is elles kepere of good or dryvere away of yvel but god, governour and lechere of thoughtes? The whiche god, whan he hath byholden from the hye tour of his purveaunce, he knoweth what

1493. *What unreste*, etc., 'Quæ, tu inquires, potest ulla iniquior confusio?' Chaucer began with Fr. 'Mais tu diras,' and then turned to Latin, construing 'inquires' as a noun.

1494. *Whethir men*, etc., do men, etc.

499. *lik a mervayle*, rather a *lik mervayle*.

is covenable to every wight, and lenyth hem that he woot that is covenable to hem. [1505] Lo herof comyth and herof is don this noble miracle of the ordre destynal, whan god, that al knoweth, dooth swiche thing, of whiche thing unknowynge folk ben astonyd. But for to constreyn (as who seith, but for to comprehend and to telle) a fewe thingis of the devyne depncesse, the whiche that mannys resoun may undirstonde, thilke man that thou wenest to ben ryght just and ryght kepyng of equite, the contrarie of that semeth to the devyne purvaunce, that al woot. And Lucan, my famylier, telleth that the victorious cause likide to the goddes, and the cause overcomen likide to Catoun. Thanne what so evere thou mayst seen that is doon in this world unhopid or unwened, certes it is the ryghte ordre of thinges; but as to thi wikkid opynioun, it is a confusioun. [1510] But I suppose that som man be so wel I-thewed that the devyne jugement and the jugement of mankynde accorden hem to gidre of hym; but he is so unstidfast of corage that, yif any adversite come to hym, he wol forleten peraventure to continue innocence, by the whiche he ne may nat witholden fortune. Thanne the wise dispensacion of god sparith hym, the whiche man adversite myghte enpeyren; for that god wol nat suffren hym to travaile, to whom that travaille nis nat covenable. Another man is parfit in alle vertus, and is an holi man and neigh to god, so that the purvaunce of god wolde deme that it were a felonie that he were touched with any adversites; so that he wol nat suffre that swich a man be moeved with any bodily maladye. [1515] But so as seyde a philosophre, the more excellent by me,—he seyde in Grec that “vertues han edified the body of the holi man.” And ofte tyme it be-tydeth that the somme

of thingis that ben to done is taken to governe to good folk, for that the malice haboundaunt of schrewes scholde ben abated. And god yeveth and departeth to other folk prosperites and adversites, I-meddled to hepe aftir the qualite of hir corages, and remordliþ some folk by adversite, for thei ne scholden nat waxen proude by long welefulnesse; and other folk he suffreth to ben travailed with harde thinges, for that thei scholden confermen the vertues of corage by the usage and the exercitacioun of pacience. [1520] And other folk dreden more than thei oughten the whiche thei myghte, wel beren, and thilke folk god ledeth in-to experience of hem-self by aspre and sorweful thingis. And many othir folk han bought honourable renoun of this world by the prys of glorious deth; and som men, that ne mowen nat ben overcomen by torment, han yeven ensample to other folk that vertu mai nat ben overcomyn by adversites.

And of alle these thinges ther nis no doute that thei ne ben doon ryghtfully and ordeynly, to the profit of hem to whom we seen these thingis betyde. For certes, that adversite cometh somtyme to schrewes and somtyme that that they desiren, it comith of these forseyde causes. [1525] And of sorweful thingis that betyden to schrewes certes no man ne wondreth; for alle men wenen that thei han wel desservid it, and that thei ben of wykkid meryt. Of whiche schrewes the torment som-tyme agasteth othere to don felonyes, and som-tyme it amendeth hem that suffren the tormentes; and the prosperite that is yeven to schrewes scheweth a gret argument to good folk what thing thei scholde demen of thilke welefulnesse, the whiche prosperite men seen ofte serven to schrewes. In the whiche thing I trowe that god dispenseth. For peraventure the nature of som man is so overthrowng to yvel,

1507. *to constreyn*, rather to *speke schortly of*.

1509. *Lucan*, v. *Pharsalia* i. 128.

1510. *but as to*, etc., rather *but to thi opinion it is a wikkid confusion*.

1512. *continue* should be *haunten* or *usen*, 'colere'; Fr. 'continuer' read as *continuer*.

1517. *taken*, entrusted.

1526. *of wykkid meryt*, 'male meritos', 'de mauuaise merite.'

and so uncovenable, that the nedy poverté of his houshold myghte rather egren hym to don felonyes; and to the maladye of hym god putteth remedye to yeven hym rychesses. [1530] And som othir man byholdeth his consciencedefouled with synnes, and makith comparysoun of his fortune and of hym-self, and dredith peraventure that his blisfulnesse, of whiche the usage is joyeful to hym, that the lesyng of thilke blisfulnesse ne be nat sorwful to hym; and therefore he wol chaunge his maneris, and, for he dredith to lesen his fortune, he forletith his wikkidnesse. To other folke is welefulnesse I-yeven unworthely, the whiche overthroweth hem in-to destruccioun, that thei han disservid; and to som othir folk is yoven power to punyschen, for that it schal be cause of continuacioun and exercisyng to good folk, and cause of torment to schrewes. [1535] For so as ther nis noon alliaunce bytwix good folk and schrewes, ne schrewes ne mowen nat acorden among hem-self. And whi nat? For schrewes discorden of hem-self by hir vices, the whiche vices al to-renden her consciences, and doon ofte time thinges the whiche thingis, whan thei han doon hem, they demen that tho thinges ne scholden nat han ben doon. For whiche thing thilke sovereyne purveaunce hath makid ofte tyme fair myracle, so that schrewes han makid schrewes to ben gode men. For whan that some schrewes seen that they suffren wrongfully felonyes of othere schrewes, they wexen eschaufed in-to hate of hem that anoyed hem, and retornen to the fruyt of vertu, whan thei studien to ben unlyk to hem that thei han hated. Certis oonly this is the devyne myght to the whiche myghte yvelis ben thanne gode whan it useth the yvolis covenably and draweth out the effect of any good. [1540] (As who seith that yvel is good

1529. *uncovenable*, rather *outrageous*, 'inopportuna', probably read as *inopportuna*.

1535. *continuacioun*, 'coutenance' ('exercitium'), read as *continuance*.

1537. H Cx. A₁ omit *fair* before *myracle*.

1539. *whan*, 'dum.'

1540. *any good*, 'aucun bien.'

only to the myghte of god, for the myght of god ordeyneth thilke yvel to good.)

For oon ordre enbraseth alle thinges, so that what wyght that departeth fro the resoun of thilke ordre which that is assigned to hym, algatis yit he slideth in-to an othir ordre; so that no thing is leveful to folye in the reaume of the devyne purveaunce (as who seith, no thing nis withouten ordenaunce in the reame of the devyne purveaunce), syn that the ryght strong god governeth alle thinges in this world. For it nis nat leveful to man to comprehend by wit, ne unfolden by word, alle the subtil ordenaunces and disposicionis of the devyne entente. For oonly it owghte suffice to han lokid that god hym-self, makere of alle natures, ordeineth and dresseth alle thingis to gode; [1545] whil that he hasteth to withholden the thingis that he hath makid into his semblaunce (that is to seyn, for to withholden thingis in-to gode, for he hym-self is good), he chasith out alle yvel fro the boundes of his comynality by the ordre of necessite destinaunce. For whiche it folweth that, yif thou loke the purveaunce ordeynynge the thinges that men wenen ben outraious or haboundaunt in erthis, thou ne schalt nat seen in no place no thing of yvel. But I se now that thou art charged with the weyghte of the questioun, and wery with lengthe of my resoun, and that thou abydest som swetnesse of songe. Tak thanne this drawght, and, whanne thou art wel reffressched and relect, thou schalt be more stedfast to stye in-to heyere questions or thinges. [1550]

'*Si vis celsi iura.*'—Metrum 6

Yif thou, wys, wilt demen in thi pure thought the ryghtes or the lawes of the heye thondrere (that is to seyn, of god), loke thou and byhooold the heightes of the sovereyn hevене. Ther kepyn the sterres, be ryghtful alliaunce of thinges,

1544. *man*, A₁ to no man; C₁ H Cx. A₂ B *men*.

1550. *or thinges*, A₂ H of *thinges*; C₂ A₁ omit.

hir oolde pees. The sonne, I-moevid by his rody fyr, ne distorbeth nat the colde cerce of the mone. Ne the sterre yclepid the Bere, that enclyneth his ravysschyng coursibowte the sovereyn heighte of the world—ne the same sterre Ursa nis nevere mo wasschen in the depe westrene see, ne coveyeth nat to deeyen his flaumbes in the sec of the occian, although it see othere sterres I-plowngid in the see. And Hesperus the sterre bodith and tellet alwey the late nyghtes, and Lucyfer the sterre bryngeth ayein the clere day. [1555]

And thus maketh Love entre-changeable the perdurable courses; and thus is discordable bataile y-put out of the contré of the sterres. This accordaunce atempryth by evenlyke maneres the elementes, that the moiste thingis, stryvyng with the drye thingis, yeven place by sloundes; and that the colde thingis joynen hem by feyth to the hote thingis; and that the lyghte fyr ariseth in-to heighte, and the hevy erthes avalen by her weyghtes. By this same causes the floury yer yeldeth swote smelles in the first somer sesoun warnyng; and the hote somer dryeth the cornes; and autumpne comith ayein hevvy of apples; and the fletyng reyn by-deweth the wynter. This a-tempraunce noryscheth and bryngeth forth alle thinges that brethith lif in this world; [1560] and thilke same attempraunce, ravysschyng, hideth and bynymeth, and drencheth undir the laste deth, alle thinges I-born.

Among thise thinges sitteth the heye makere, kyng and lord, welle and bygynnyng, lawe and wys juge to don equite, and governeth and enclyneth the bryddles of thinges. And tho thinges that he stireth to gon by moevyng, he with-draweth and aresteth, and affermeth the moevable or wandryng thinges. For

yif that he ne clepide nat ayein the ryght goyng of thinges, and yif that he ne constreynede hem nat eftsones into roundnesses enclyned, the thingis that ben now contynued by stable ordenaunce, thei scholden departen from hir welle (that is to seyn, from hir bygynnyng), and failen (that is to seyn, tornen into noght). This is the comune love to alle thingis, and alle thinges axen to ben holden by the fyn of good. [1565] For elles ne nyghten they nat lasten yif thei ne comen nat eftsones ayein, by love retorned, to the cause that hath yeven hem beinge (that is to seyn, to god).

'Iam ne igitur rides.'—Prosa 7

Sestow nat thanne what thing folweth alle the thingis that I have seyd?

'What thing?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'al outrely that alle fortune is good.'

'And how may that be?' quod I.

'Now undirstand,' quod sche, 'so as al fortune, whethir so it be joyeful fortune or aspre fortune, is yeven eyther bycause of gerdonyng or elles of exercisynge of good folk, or elles bycause to punysscien or elles chastisen schrewes; thanne is alle fortune good, the whiche fortune is certeyn that it be either ryghtful or elles profitable.' [1570]

'Forsothe this is a ful verray resoun,' quod I; 'and yif I considere the purveance and the destyne that thou taughtest me a litel here byforn, this sentence is sustenyd by stedfast resouns. But yif it like unto the, lat us nombren hem amonges thilke thingis, of whiche thou seydest a litel here byforn that thei ne were nat able to ben wned to the peple.'

'Why so?' quod sche.

1564. *roundnesses enclyned*, 'flexos orbes,' 'rondesces flechiez.'

1555. *bodith*, etc., 'seras nuntiat umbras.'

1556. *the perdurable*, C₁ H Cx. omit the; perhaps the original reading was *her*, Fr. 'leur.'

1560. *brethith*, A₁ *bredith*; C₂ A₂ Cx. *berith*.

1562. *Among thise thinges*, 'inter ea,' read as 'inter ea'; so also in French.

1564. *that ben now contynued*, etc., 'Quæ nunc stabilis continet ordo'; 'continet' as *continuit* (or through Fr. 'contenue'), and 'ordo' as ablative through 'par ordenance estable.' A₂ *conteyned*, probably a correction.

'For that the comune word of men,' quod I, 'mysuseth this manere speche of fortune, and seyn ofte tymes that the fortune of som wyght is wikkid.'

'Woltow thanne,' quod sche, 'that I approche a litil to the wordis of the peple, so that it seme nat to hem that I be overmoche departed fro the usage of mankyng?'

'As thou wilt,' quod I.

'Demestow nat,' quod sche, 'that alle thing that profiteth is good?' [1575]

'Yis,' quod I.

'And certes thilke thing that exerciseth or corrigith profitith?'

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Thanne is it good,' quod sche.

'Whi nat?' quod I.

'But this is the fortune,' quod sche, 'of hem that eyther ben put in vertu and batayllen ayein aspre thingis, or elles of hem that eschuen and declynen fro vices and taken the weye of vertu.'

'This ne mai I nat denye,' quod I.

'But what seistow of the merye fortune that is yeven to good folk in guerdoun? Demeth aught the peple that it is wikkid?'

'Nay forsothe,' quod I; 'but thei demen, as it soth is, that it is ryght good.' [1580]

'And what seistow of that othir fortune,' quod sche, 'that, although it be aspre and restreyneth the schrewes by ryghtful torment, weneth aught the peple that it be good?'

'Nay,' quod I, 'but the peple demeth that it is moost wrecchid of alle thingis that mai ben thought.'

'War now and loke wel,' quod sche, 'lest that we, in folwyng the opynioun of the peple, have confessid and concluded thing that is unable to be wened to the peple?'

'What is that?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'it folweth or comith of thingis that ben grauntid that alle fortune, what so evere it be, of hem that ben eyther in possessioun of vertu, or

1573. *seyn*, they say.

in the ences of vertu, or elles in the purchasyng of vertu, that thilke fortune is good; and that alle fortune is ryght wikkid to hem that duellen in schrewidnesse.' (As who seith: 'And thus weneth nat the peple.') [1585]

'That is soth,' quod I, 'al be it so that no man dar confessen it ne by-knowen it.'

'Whi so?' quod sche; 'for ryght as the stronge man ne semeth nat to abaissen or disdaignen as ofte tyme as he herith the noyse of the bataile, ne also it ne semeth nat to the wise man to beren it greuously as ofte as he is lad into the stryf of fortune. For, bothe to the to man and eek to the tothir thilke difficulte is the matere, to the to man of ences of his glorious renoun, and to the tothir man to conformen his sapience (—that is to seyn the asprenesse of his estat). For therfore it is called "vertu," for that it sustenith and enforceth by hise strengthes that it nis nat overcomen by adversites. Ne certes thou, that art put in the ences or in the heyghte of vertu, ne hast nat comen to fleten with delices, and for to welken in bodily lust; [1590] thou sowest or plawntest a ful egre bataile in thy corage ayeins every fortune. For that the sorwful fortune ne confownde the nat, ne that the myrie fortune ne corrumpe the nat, occupye the mene by stidefast strengthes. For al that evere is undir the mene, or elles al that overpasseth the mene, despyseth welefulnesse (as who seith, it is vicious), and ne hath no mede of his travaile. For it is set in your hand (as who seith, it lyth in your power) what fortune yow is levest (that is to seyn good or yvel). For alle fortune that semeth scharp or aspre, yif it ne exercise nat the good folk ne chastiseth the wikkide folk, it punysseth. [1595]

1587. *semeth*, 'debet' read as *debet*.

1590. *ences*, *heyghte*, 'provectu,' 'hautece.'

1591. *sowest* or *plawntest*, 'conseritis' (prelium).

1595. *yif it ne*, etc., should be *yif it ne exercise ne chastiseth*, it punysseth. The translation combines two variant readings of the Latin.

'*Bella bis quinis.*'—Metrum 7

The wrekere Attrides (that is to seyn, Agamenon), that wrought and contynued the batailes by x yer, recovered and purgide in wrekyngc, by the destruccioun of Troye, the loste chaumbris of mariage of his brothir. (That is to seyn that he, Agamenon, wan ayein Eleyne that was Menelaus wif his brothir.) In the mene while that thilke Agamenon desired to yeven sayles to the Grykkyssche naveye, and boughte ayein the wyndes by blood, he unclothide hym of pite of fadir; and the sory preest yeveth in sacrificyng the wrechide kutyngc of throte of the doughter. (That is to seyn that Agamenon leet kутten the throte of his doughter by the preest, to maken alliaunce with his goddes, and for to han wynd with whiche he myghte wenden to Troye.) [1600]

Ytakus (that is to seyn Ulixes) hyweppe his felawes I-lorn, the whiche felawes fyerse Poliphemus, ligginge in his grete cave, had fretyn and dreynt in his empty wombe. But natheles Poliphemus, wood for his blynde visage, yald to Ulixes ioie by his sorwful teres. (This is to seyn that Ulixes smoot out the eye of Poliphemus, that stood in his forheed, for whiche Ulixes hadde ioie whan he say Poliphemus wepyngc and blynd.)

Hercules is celebrable for his harde travaille. He dawntide the proude Centauris (half hors, half man), and he byrafte the dispoilyngc fro the cruel lyoun (that is to seyn, he slouhe the lyoun and rafte hym his skyn); he smot the briddes that hyghthen Arpiis with certain arwes; [1605] he ravysschide appllis fro the wakyngc dragoun, and his hand was the more hevy for the goldene metal; he drowh Cerberus (the hound of

helle) by his treble cheyne; he, overcomer, as it is seyde, hath put an unmeke lord foddre to his cruel hors (this to seyn that Hercules slowh Diomedes, and made his hors to freten hym); and he, Hercules, slowh Idra the serpent, and brende the venym; and Acheleous the flod, defowled in his forheed, dreynthe his schamefast visage in his strondes (that is to seyn that Achaleous coude transfiguren hymself into diverse liknesse, and, as he faught with Hercules, at the laste he torned hym in-to a bolc, and Hercules brak oon of his hornes, and he for schame hidde hym in his ryver); [1610] and he, Hercules, caste adoun Antheus the geaunt in the strondes of Libye; and Kacus apaysede the wratthes of Evander (this to seyn that Hercules slouh the monstre Kacus, and apaysed with that deth the wratthe of Evander); and the bristiled boor markide with scomes the scholdres of Hercules, the whiche scholdres the heye cercle of hevenc sholde thriste; and the laste of his labours was that he susteynede the hevenc uppon his nekke unbowed; and he disservide eftsones the hevenc to ben the pris of his laste travaille.

Goth now thanne, ye stronge men, ther as the heye wey of the greet ensauple ledith yow. [1615] O nyce men! why nake ye your bakkes? (As who seith, "O ye slowe and delicat men! whi flee ye adversites, and ne fyghte nat ayeins hem by vertu, to wynnen the mede of the hevenc?") For the erthe overcomen yeveth the sterres. (This to seyn that whan that erthly lust is overcomyn, a man is makid worthy to the hevenc.)'

EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS

INCIPIIT LIBER QUINTUS

'*Dixerat orationisque cursum.*'—Prosa 1

Sche hadde seyde, and tornede the cours of hir resoun to some othere thingis to

1613. *scoms*, flecks of foam, 'spumis.'

1618. *the cours*, C₁ C₂ *by cours*.

1618. *resoun*, 'orationis' read as *ratiōis*.

1596. *recovered*, etc., 'reconura' ('piavi'), and Latin gloss 'purgavit ulciscendo.'

1598. *pite of fadir*, 'pietatem paternam' (in gloss).

1598. *yeveth in sacrificyngc*, etc., 'Frederat natæ jugulum.'

1598. *kutyngc of throte* is due to a note in Aq.

1601. *empty*, rather *grete*.

1604. *dispoilyngc*, rather *spoil*.

ben treted and to ben Ispedd. Than seide I, 'Certes ryghtful is thin amonestyng and ful digne by auctorite. But thatthou seydest whilom that the questioun of the devyne purveaunce is enlaced with many othere questiouns, I undirstande wel and prove it by the same thing. But I axe yif that thou wenest that hap be any' thing in any weys; and yif thou wenest that hap be anything, what is it?' [1620]

Thanne quod sche, 'I haste me to yelden and assoilen to the the dette of my byheste, and to schewen and openen the wey, by whiche wey thou maist comen ayein to thi contre. But al be it so that the thingis whiche that thou axest ben ryght profitable to knowe, yit ben thei divers somewhat fro the path of my purpos; and it is to douten that thou ne be makid weery by mys-weyes, so that thou ne maist nat suffise to mesuren the ryghte weic.'

'Ne doute the ther-of no thing,' quod I; 'for for to knowen thilke thingis togidre, in the whiche thinges I delite me gretly, --that schal ben to me in stede of rest, syn it nis nat to douten of the thilgis folwyng, whan every syde of thi disputesioun schal han ben stedfast to me by undoutous feyth.' [1625]

'Thanne,' seide sche, 'that manere wol I don the,' and bygan to speken ryght thus: 'Certes,' quod sche, 'yif any wyght diffynisse hap in this manere, that is to seyn that "hap is a bytydyng I-brought forth by foolissh moevyng and by no knyttynge of causes," I conferme that hap nis ryght naught in no wise; and I deme al outrely that hap nis, ne duelleth but a voys (as who seith, but an idel word), withouten any significacioun of thing summitted to that voys. For

1618. *ful digne*, etc., 'dignissima auctoritate' misconstrued.

1619. *by the same thing*, rather *by the thing itself*, i.e. by experience.

1620. *in any weys*, at all.

1625. *knowen* . . . *logidre*, 'agnoscere' ends first clause, 'simul cum' begins the second one. Chaucer took 'agnoscere simul' together.

1628. *thing summitted*, 'rei subjectæ'.

what place myght ben left or duellynge to folie and to disordenaunce, syn that god ledeth and constreyneth alle thingis by ordre? For this sentence is verray and soth, that "no thing bath his beyng of naught," to the whiche sentence noon of these oolde folk ne withseide nevere; [1630] al be it so that they ne undirstoden ne meneden it nat by god prince and bygynners of wirkyng, but thei casten as a maner foundement of subiect material (that is to seyn, of the nature of alle resouns). And yif that any thing is woxen or comen of no causes, thanne schal it seme that thilke thing is comen or woxen of nawght; but yif this ne mai nat ben don, thanne is nat possible that hap be any swich thing as I have diffynysschid a litel here byforn.'

'How schal it thanne be?' quod I. 'Nys ther thanne no thing that by right may ben clepid other hap or elles aventure of fortune; or is ther awght, al be it so that it is hidd for the peple, to whiche thing these wordes ben covenable?'

'Myn Aristotles,' quod sche, 'in the book of his Phisic diffynysseth this thing by schort resoun, and nyghe to the sothe.'

'In whiche manere?' quod I. [1635]

'As ofte,' quod sche, 'as men don any thing for grace of any other thing, and an other thing than thilke thing that men entenden to don bytideth by some causes, it is clepid "hap." Ryght as a man dalf the erthe bycause of tylyng of the feld, and founde ther a gobet of gold byddolven; thanne wenen folk that it is byfalle by fortounous bytydyng. But forsothe it nis nat of naught, for it hath his propre causes, of whiche causes the cours unforseyn and unwar semeth to han makid hap. For yif the tiliere of the feeld ne dulve nat in the erthe, and yif the hidere of the gold ne hadde hyd the gold in thilke place, the gold ne hadde nat ben founde. These ben thanne the

1631. *by god*, in respect to god.

1631. *as*, as it were.

1635. *thing*, C₃ A₁ omit.

1639. *dulve*, pret. subj. of *deluen*.

causes of the abregginge of fortuit hap, the whiche abreggyng of fortuit hap cometh of causes encontrynge and flowynge togidre to hem-self, and nat by the entencioun of the doere. [1640] For neither the hidere of the gold ne the delvere of the feeld ne undirstoden nat that the gold sholde han ben founde; but, as I seide, it bytidde and ran togidre that he dalf there as that oothir had hid the gold. Now mai I thus diffinysen "hap": hap is an unwar betydinge of causes assembled in thingis that ben doon for som oothir thing; but thilke ordre, procedinge by an uneschuable byndinge to-gidre, whiche that descendeth fro the welle of purveaunce, that ordeyneth alle thingis in hir places and in hir tymes, makith that the causes rennen and assemblen togidre.

'Rupis Achemenie.'—Metrum 1

Tigris and Eufrates resoven and springen of o welle in the craggys of the roche of the contre of Achemenye, ther as the fleinge bataile ficcheth hir dartes retorned in the breestis of hem that folwen hem. [1645] And sone aftir the same ryverys, Tigris and Eufrates, unioignen and departen hir watres. And if thei comen togidre, and ben assemblid and clepid togidre into o course, thanne moten thilke thingis fleten togidre whiche that the watir of the entrechaungynge flood bryngeth. The schippes and the stokkes, araced with the flood, moten assemblen; and the watris I-medled wrappeth or emplieth many fortunel happes or maneris; the whiche wandrynge happes natheles thilke enclynyng lowenesse of the erthe and the flowinge ordre of the slydinge watir governeth. Right so fortune, that

1639. *abregginge of fortuit hap*, 'fortuiti compendii' (accidental gain) glossed 'fortuiti eventus'; Fr. 'l'abregement du cas fortunel' with wrong meaning of *compendium*, which Chaucer follows.

1641. *undirstoden* (C_2 *undirstonden*, but probably a correction), 'intendit', Fr. 'entendirent', which Chaucer misunderstood.

1645. *the fleinge bataile*, etc., i.e. in Parthia.

semeth as it fletith with slakid or ungoverned bridles, it suffreth bridelis (that is to seyn, to ben governed), and passeth by thilke lawe (that is to seyn, by the devyne ordenaunce). [1650]

'Animadverto inquam.'—Prosa 2

'This undirstonde I wel,' quod I, 'and I accorde me that it is ryght as thou seist, but I axe yif ther be any liberte of fre wille in this ordre of causes that clyven thus togidre in hem-self. Or elles I wolde witen yif that the destinal cheyne con-strengthen the moevynge of the corages of men.'

'Yis,' quod sche, 'ther is liberte of fre wil. Ne ther ne was nevere no nature of resoun that it ne hadde liberte of fre wil. For every thing that may naturely usen resoun, it hath doom by whiche it discernith and demeth every thing; thanne knoweth it by it-self thinges that ben to fleen and thinges that ben to desiren. [1655] And thilke thing that any wight demeth to ben desired, that axeth or desireth he; and fleeth thilke thing that he throweth be to fleen. Wherefore in alle thingis that resoun is, in hem also is liberte of willynge and of nillynge. But I ne ordeyne nat (as who seith, I ne graunte nat) that this liberte be evenelyk in alle thinges. For-why in the sovereynes devynes substaunces (that is to seyn in spirites) jugement is more cleer, and wil nat I-corrupted, and myght redy to speden thinges that ben desired. But the scoules of men moten nedes be more fre whan thei loken hem in the speculacioun or lokinge of the devyne thought; [1660] and lasse fre whan thei slyden in-to the bodyes; and yit lasse fre whan thei ben gadrid to gidre and comprehended in ertlii membres. But the laste servage is whan that thei ben yeven to vices and han I-falle fro the possessioun of hir propre resoun.

1650. *passeth*, moves along.

1660. *loken hem* (C_1 A_2 him), 'conservant', Fr. 'se gardent' mistranslated.

For afir that thei han cast away hir eyghen fro the lyght of the sovereyn sothfastnesse to lowe thingis and derke, anon thei derken by the cloude of ignorance and ben troubled by felonous talentes; to the whiche talentes whan thei approchen and assenten, thei hepen and encrecen the servage whiche thei han joyned to hem-self; and in this manere thei ben caytifs fro hir propre liberte. The whiche thingis natheles the lokynge of the devyne purveaunce seth, that alle thingis byholdeth and seeth fro eterne, and ordeyneth hem everiche in here merites as thei ben predestinat; and it is seid in Greke that "alle thinges he seeth and alle thinges he herith." [1665]

'Puro clarum lumine.'—Metrum 2

Homer with the hony mouth (that is to seyn, Homer with the swete dities) singeth that the sonne is cler by pure light; natheles yit ne mai it nat, by the infirme light of his bemes, breken or percen the inward entayles of the erthe or elles of the see. So ne seth nat god, makere of the grete world. To hym, that loketh alle thinges from an hey, ne withstondeth no thinges by hevynesse of erthe, ne the nyght ne withstondeth nat to hym by the blake cloudes. Thilke god seeth in o strok of thought alle thinges that ben, or weren, or schollen comen; and thilke god, for he loketh and seeth alle thingis alone, thou maist seyn that he is the verrai sonne.'

'Tum ego en inquam.'—Prosa 3

Thanne seide I, 'Now am I confowndide by a more hard doute than I was.'

'What doute is that?' quod sche, 'for certes I coniecte now by whiche thingis thou art trubled.' [1670]

'It semeth,' quod I, 'to repugnien and

1663. *talentes*, 'affectibus.'

1665. *in Greke*, Homer, *Il.* iii. 277; *Odys.* xii. 323.

1666. *'Puro clarum lumine Phœbum Meiliffu canit oris Homerus.'*

to contrarien gretly, that god knoweth byforn alle thinges and that ther is any freedom of liberte. For yif it so be that god loketh alle thinges byforn ne god ne mai nat ben desceyved in no manere, thanne moot it nedes ben that alle thinges betyden the whiche that the purveaunce of god hath seyn byforn to comen. For whiche, yif that god knoweth byforn nat only the werkes of men, but also hir conseilles and hir willes, thanne ne schal ther be no liberte of arbitre; ne certes ther ne may be noon other dede, ne no wil, but thilke whiche that the devyne purveaunce, that ne mai nat ben disseyved, hath felid byforn. [1675] For yif that thei myghten writen away in othere manere than thei ben purveyed, thanne ne sholde ther be no stedefast prescience of thing to comen, but rather an uncerteyn opynioun; the whiche thing to trowen of god, I deme felonye and unleveful. Ne I ne proeve nat thilke same resoun (as who seith, I ne allowe nat, or I ne preyse nat, thilke same resoun) by whiche that som men wenen that thei mowe assoilen and unknyttten the knotte of this questioun. For certes thei seyn that thing nis nat to comen for that the purveaunce of god hath seyn byforn that it is to comen, but rather the contrarie; and that is this: that, for that the thing is to comen, that therefore ne mai it nat ben hidd fro the purveaunce of god; and in this manere this necessite slideth ayein into the contrarie partie: [1680] ne it ne byhoveth nat nedes that thinges betiden that ben I-purveied, but it byhoveth nedes that thinges that ben to comen ben I-purveied: but, as it were, y travailed (as who seith, that thilke answeere procedith ryght as though men travaileden or weren besy) to enqueren the whiche thing is cause of the whiche thing, as

1671 ff. Cp. *Troilus*, iv. 667-1078.

1677. *proere*, wrong meaning of 'probo'; Fr. 'loc'; cp. Chaucer's gloss.

1681. *nedes*, necessarily.

1682. *y travailed*, MSS. *ytravailed* (H Cx. *travailed*), cp. *Troilus*, v. 1009; Fr. 'nous travaillons', both incorrect translations of 'laboretur.' Cp. Chaucer's gloss.

whethir the prescience is cause of the necessite of thinges to comen, or elles that the necessite of thinges to comen is cause of the purveaunce. But I ne enforce me nat now to schewen it, that the bytydyng of thingis I-wyst byforn is necessarie, how so or in what manere that the ordre of causes hath it-self; although that it ne semie naught that the prescience bringe in necessite of bytydyng to thinges to comen. [1685] For certes yif that any wyght sitteth, it byhoveth by necessite that the opynioun be soth of hym that coniecteth that he sitteth; and ayeinward also is it of the contrarie: yif the opinioun be soth of any wyght for that he sitteth, it byhoveth by necessite that he sitte. Thanne is here necessite in the toon and in the tothir; for in the toon is necessite of syttinge, and certes in the tothir is necessite of soth. But therfore sitteth nat a wyght for that the opynioun of the sittinge is soth, but the opinioun is rather soth for that a wyght sitteth byforn. And thus, although that the cause of the soth cometh of that other side (as who seith, that although the cause of soth cometh of the sittinge, and nat of the trewe opinioun), algates yit is ther comune necessite in that oon and in that othir. [1690] Thus scheweth it that y may make semblable skiles of the purveaunce of god and of thingis to comen. For although that for that thingis ben to comen therfore ben thei purveied, and nat certes for thei be purveied therfore ne bytide thei nat; natheles byhoveth it by necessite that eyther the thinges to comen ben I-purveied of god, or elles that the thinges that ben I-purveied of god betyden. And this thing onoly suffiseth I-now to destroien the fredom of oure arbitre (that is to seyn, of our fre wil). But certes now scheweth it wel how fer fro the sothe and how up-so-down is this thing that

we seyn, that the betydyng of temporel thingis is cause of the eterne prescience. [1695] But for to wenen that god purveieth the thinges to comen for thei ben to comen, —what oothir thing is it but for to wene that thilke thinges that bytiden whilom ben causes of thilke sovereign purveaunce that is in god? And her-to I adde yit this thing: that ryght as whanne that I woot that a thing is, it byhoveth by necessite that thilke selve thing be: and eek whan I have knowen that any thing schal betyden, so byhovith it by necessite that thilke same thing betide: so folweth it thanne that the betydyng of the thing that I wyste byforn ne may nat ben eschued. And at the laste, yif that any wyght wene a thing to ben oothir weyes than it is, it is nat onoly unscience, but it is desceyvable opynioun ful divers and fer fro the sothe of science. Wherefore, yif any thing be so to comen that the betydyng of it ne be nat certain ne necessarie, who mai witen byforn that thilke thing is to comen? [1700] For ryght as science ne may nat ben medled with falsnesse (as who seith, that yif I woot a thing, it ne mai nat ben fals that I ne woot it), ryght so thilke thing that is conceived by science may ben noon other weies than as it is conceived. For that is the cause why that science wanteth lesyng (as who seith, why that wytyng ne resceyveth nat lesyng of that it woot); for it byhoveth by necessite that every thing be ryght as science comprehendeth it to be. What schal I thanne seyn? In whiche manere knoweth god byforn the thinges to comen, yif thei ne ben nat certain? For yif that he deme that thei ben to comen uneschewably, and so may be that it is possible that thei ne schollen nat comen, god is disseyved. [1705] But not onoly to trowe that god is disseyved, but for to speke it with mouthe, it is a felonous synne. But yif that god woot that ryght so as thinges len to comen, so schollen they comen, so that

1684. *I ne enforce me nat* should be *I enforce me*. Ch. and Fr. translate 'non nitamur' a variant of 'nos nitamur'

1691. *skiles*, arguments.

1701. *that I ne woot it*. The 'ne' is due to the negative in the main clause.

he wite egaly (as who seith, indifferently) that thingis mowen ben doon or elles nat I-doon, what is thilke prescience that ne comprehendeth no certein thing ne stable? Or elles what difference is ther bytwixe the prescience and thilke jape-worthidevynynge of Tyresie the divynour, that seide, "Al that I seie," quod he, "either it schal be or elles it schal nat be?" Or elles how mochel is worth the devyne prescience more than the opinioun of mankynde, yif so be that it demeth the thinges uncertayn, as men doon, of the whiche domes of men the betydinge is nat certein? But yif so be that noon uncertein thing ne mai ben in hym that is certein welle of alle thinges, than is the betydinge certein of thilke thingis whiche he hath wist byform fermely to comen. [1710] For whiche it folweth that the freedom of the conseiles and of the werkis of mankynde nis noon, syn that the thought of god, that seeth alle thinges withouten error of falsnesse, byndeth and constreyneth hem to a bytidynge by necessite. And yif this thing be oonly I-grauntid and resceyved (this is to seyn, that ther nis no fre wil), thanne scheweth it wel how gret destruccioun and how gret damages ther folwen of thingis of mankynde. For in idel ben ther thanne purposed and byhyght medes to good folk, and peynes to badde folk, syn that no moevynge of fre corage voluntarie ne hath nat disserved hem (that is to seyn neither mede ne peyne). And it scholde seme thanne that thilke thing is alther-worst whiche that is now demed for alther-moost just and moost ryghtful, that is to seyn that schrewes ben punyschid or elles that good folk ben I-gerdoned. [1715] The whiche folk, syn that hir propre wil ne sent hem nat to the toon ne to that othir (that is to seyn neither to good ne to harm), but [ther] constreyneth hem certein necessite of thingis to comen; thanne ne schulle ther nevere be, ne nevere were,

1708. *Tyresie*, Tyresias; cp. 84.

1711. *nis noon*, 'est nulle', is no freedom.

1713. *purposed*, offered.

1716. *ther*, supplied from Fr.

vice ne vertu, but it scholde rather ben confusion of alle dissertes medlid withouten discrecioun. And yit ther folweth anothir inconvenient, of the whiche ther ne mai be thought no more felonous ne more wikke, and that is this: that, so as the ordre of thingis is I-led and cometh of the purveaunce of god, ne that no thing is lefevel to the conseiles of mankynde (as who seith that men han no power to don no thing ne wilne no thing), thanne folweth it that our vices ben ferrid to the makere of alle good (as who seith, thanne folweth it that god oughte han the blame of our vices, syn he constreyneth us by necessite to doon vices). [1720]

Than nis ther no resoun to han hope in god, ne for to preien to god. For what scholde any wyght hopen to god, or why scholde he preien to god, syn that the ordenaunce of destyne, the whiche that mai nat ben enclyned, knytteth and streyneth alle thingis that men mai desiren? Thanne scholde ther be don awey thilke oonly alliance bytwixen god and men, that is to seyn, to hopen and to preien. But by the pris of ryghtwisnesse and of verray mekenesse we disserven the gerdon of the devyne grace whiche that is inestimable (that is to seyn, that it is so greet that it ne mai nat ben ful I-preysed). And this is oonly the manere (that is to seyn, hope and preieris) for whiche it semeth that men mowen spekyn with god, and by resoun of supplicacion be conioyned to thilke cleernesse that nis nat aprochid no rather or that men bysken it and impetren it. [1725] And yif men ne wene nat that hope ne preieres ne han no strengthis by the necessite of thingis to comen I-resceyved, what thing is ther thanne by whiche we mowen ben conioyned and clyven to thilke sovereyne

1717. *inconvenient*, 'desconvenue,' inconvenience.

1725. *oonly the manere . . . for whiche*, the only way . . . by which.

1725. *no rather or*, 'prius quoque,' which Chaucer has wrongly connected with 'inaccessus lui i,' should be *and rather or*, i.e. even before.

1726. *I-resceyved*, conceded.

prince of thingis? For whiche it byhoveth by necessite that the lynage of mankynde, as thou songe a litel here byfor, be departed and unioyned from his welle, and failen of his bygynnyng (that is to seyn, god).

'*Quenam discors.*'—Metrum 3

What discordable cause hath to-rent and unioyned the byndynge or the alliaunce of thingis (that is to seyn, the coniuncions of god and of man)? Whiche god hath establisschid so grete bataile bytwixen these two sothfast or verreie thinges (that is to seyn, bytwyxen the purveaunce of god and fre wil) that thei ben singuler and dyvided, ne that they ne wole nat ben medled ne couplid to-gidre. But ther nis no discord to the verray thinges, but thei clyven alwey certain to hem-self. [1735] But the thought of man, confownded and overthrowen by the derke membres of the body, ne mai nat be fyr of his derked lookynge (that is to seyn, by the vigour of his insyghte while the soule is in the body) knowen the thyne subtilite knytinges of thinges. But wherfore eschaufeth it so by so gret love to fynden thilke notes of soth I-covered? (That is to seyn, wherfore eschaufeth the thought of man by so gret desir to knowen thilke notificaciouns that ben I-hid undir the covertures of soth?) Woot it aught thilke thing that it angwissous desireth to knowe? (As who seith, nay; for no man ne travaileth for to witen thingis that he wot. And therefore the texte seith thus :) [1735] But who travaileth to wite thingis I-knowe? And yif that he ne knoweth hem nat, what sekith thilke blynde thought? What is he that desireth any thyng of which he wot right nought?

1728. Chaucer's glosses here are derived mainly from Fr.

1735. *But ther nis*, etc., 'An nulla est,' etc. 'An' read as 'ac,' or perhaps gloss is Aq. 'An est nota solutionis.' Similarly, *But whanne*, etc. 1741.

(As who seith, who so desireth any thing, nedes somwhat he knoweth of it, or elles he coude nat desiren it.) Or who may folwen thinges that ne ben nat I-wist? And thoughe that he seke tho thingis, wher schal he fynde hem? What wyght that is al unkunynge and ignoraunt may knowe the forme that is I-founde? [1740] But whanne the soule byholdeth and seeth the heye thought (that is to seyn, god), thanne knoweth it togidre the somme and the singularites (that is to seyn the principles and everyche by hym-self). But now, while the soule is hidd in the cloude and in the derkenesse of the membres of the body, it ne hath nat al foryeten itself, but it withholdeth the somme of thinges and lesith the singularites. Thanne who so that sekith sothnesse, he nis in neyther nother habite, for he not nat al, ne he ne hath nat al foryeten; but yit hym remembreth the somme of thinges that he withholdeth, and axeth conseile, and retretith deepliche thinges I-seyn by-for (that is to seyn, the grete somme in his mynde). So that he mowe adden the parties that he hath foryeten to thilke that he hath withholden.' [1745]

'*Tum illa vetus inquit hec est.*'—Prosa 4

Than seide sche 'This is,' quod sche, 'the olde questioun of the purveaunce of god. And Marcus Tullius, whan he devyded the divynaciouns (that is to seyn, in his book that he wrot of dyvynaciouns), he moevede gretly this questioun; and thou thiself hast y-sought it mochel, and outrely, and longe. But yit ne hath it nat ben determined, ne I-sped fermely ne diligently of any of yow. And the cause of this derkenesse and of this difficulte is, for that the moevynge of the resoun of mankynde ne may nat moeven to (that is to seyn, applicen or joignen to) the simplicite of the devyne prescience; the

1743. *neyther nother*, neutro.'

1744. *retretith* (A₁ A₂ *tretith*), 'retraite,' 'retractans.'

1746. *devyded* ('distribuit'), C₂ H *devynede*; Cx. *distribuyd* (from rubric?).

whiche symplicite of the devyne prescience, yif that men myghte thinken it in any manere (that is to seyn, that yif men myghten thinken and comprehend the thinges as god seeth hem), thanne ne scholde ther duelle outrely no doute. [1750] The whiche resoun and cause of difficulte I schal assaye at the last to schewe and to speden, whanne I have first I-spendid and answerd to the resouns by whiche thou art y-moeved. For I axe whi thou wenest that thilke resouns of hem that assoilen this questioun ne be nat speedful I-now ne sufficient; the whiche solucioun, or the whiche resoun, for that it demeth that the prescience nis nat cause of necessite to thinges to comen, than weneth it nat that fredom of wil be disturbed or y-let be prescience. For ne drawestow nat argumentes fro elles where of the necessite of thingis to comen (as who seith, any oothir wey than thus) but that thilke thinges that the prescience woot byforn ne mowen nat unbetyde? [1755] (That is to seyn, that thei moten betide.) But thanne, yif that prescience ne putteth no necessite to thingis to comen, as thou thi-self hast confessed it and byknowen a litel here byforn, what cause or what is it (as who seith, ther may no cause be) by whiche that the endes voluntarie of thinges myghten be constrained to certein bytydyng? For by grace of possessioun, so that thou mowe the betere undirstonde this that folweth, I pose that ther ne be no prescience. Thanne axe I, quod sche, 'in as moche as aperteneth to that, scholden thanne thingis that comen of fre wil ben constrained to bytiden by necessite?' 'Nay,' quod I.

'Thanne ayeinward,' quod sche, 'I suppose that ther be prescience, but that it ne putteth no necessite to thingis;

1751. *I-spendid*, etc., 'expendero' (I shall have considered), 'respondit'.

1755. *For ne drawestow nat*, etc., 'Num enim tu aliunde,' etc.

1757. *Possessioun* (H Cx. *possession*), 'possessionis gratia' should be *possession*; but Fr. 'possession' (sic), L. 'possession'.

thanne trowe I that thilke selve fredom of wil schal duellen al hool and absolut and unbounden. But thou wolt seyn that, al be it so that prescience nis nat cause of the necessite of tydyng to thingis to comen, algatis yit it is a sign that the thingis ben to bytyden by necessite. [1760] By this manere thanne, althoughe the prescience ne hadde nevere I-ben, yit algate or at the leste wey it is certein thing that the endes and bytydinges of thingis to comen scholden ben necessarie. For every signe scheweth and signifieth oonly what the thing is, but it ne makith nat the thing that it signifieth. For whiche it byhoveth first to schewen that no thing ne bytideth that it ne betideth by necessite, so that it mai apiere that the prescience is signe of this necessite; or elles, yif ther nere no necessite, certes thilke prescience ne myghte nat ben signe of thinge that nis nat. But certes, it is now certein that the proeve of this, y-susteyned by stedfast resoun, ne schal nat ben lad ne proeved by signes, ne by argumentes I-taken fro withoute, but by causes covenable and necessarie. [1765] But thou mayst seyn, "How may it be that the thingis ne betyden nat that ben I-purveied to comen?" But certes ryght as we trowen that tho thingis whiche that purveaunce woot byforn to comen, ne ben nat to bytiden. But that ne scholde we nat demen; but rathir, althoughe that thei schal betyden, yit ne have thei no necessite of hir kynde to betyden. And this maystow lyghtly aperceyven by this that I schal seyn. For we seen many thingis whan thei ben don byforn oure eyen, ryght as men seen the cartere worken in the tornyng and in atempryng or adressyng of hise cartes or chariottes. [1770] And by this manere (as who seith, maistow undirstonden) of alle othere werkmen. Is ther thanne any necessite (as who seith, in our look-

1765. *argumentis I-taken*, etc., 'petitis extrinsecus argumentis'.

1766. *But certes*, etc., the answer to the preceding question.

1770. *cartere*, *cartes*, charioteer, chariots.

yngē) that constreynith or compelleth any of thilke thingis to ben don so?’

‘Nay,’ quod I, ‘for in idel and in veyn were al the effect of craft, yif that alle thingis weren moeved by constreynyngē (that is to seyn, by constreinyngē of our eyen or of our sighte).’

‘The thingis thanne,’ quod sche, ‘that, whan men doon hem, ne han no necessite that men doon hem, eek the same thingis, first er thei ben don, thei ben to comen withoute necessite. For why ther ben some thingis to betyden, of whiche the eendes and the bytydynges of hem ben absolut and quit of alle necessite. [1775] For certes I ne trow nat that any man wolde seyn thus: that tho thingis that men don now, that thei ne weren to bytiden first or thei weren I-doon; and thilke same thinges, al-thoughe that men hadden I-wyst hem byforn, yit thei han fre bytydynges. For right as science of thingis present ne bryngith in no necessite to thingis that men doon, right so the prescience of thinges to comen ne bryngith in no necessite to thinges to bytiden. But thou maist seyn that of thilke same it is I-douted, as whethir that of thilke thingis that ne han noon issues and bytydynges necessities, yif therof mai ben any prescience; for certes thei semen to discorden. For thou wenest, yif that thingis ben I-seyn byfore, that necessite folwith hem; [1780] and yif necessite failthe hem, thei ne myghten nat ben wist byforn, and that nothing may be comprehended by science but certein; and yif tho thinges that ne han no certein bytydingis ben I-purveied as certein, it scholde ben dirknese of opinioun, nat sothfastnesse of science. And thou wenest that it be dyvers fro the holnesse of science that any man schol deme a thing to ben otherwyse than it is it-self. And the cause of this errour is that of alle the thingis that every wyght hath I-knowe, thei wenen that tho thingis ben I-knowe al by by the strengthe and by the nature of the thinges that ben I-wyst or

1781. *but certein*, but certainty; cp. 1711, 1717.

I-knowe. And it is al the contrarye; for al that evere is I-knowe, it is rather comprehendid and knowen, nat afir his strengthe and his nature, but afir the faculte (that is to seyn, the power and the nature) of hem that knowen. [1785] And, for that this schal mowen schewen by a schort ensaumple, the same rowndnesse of a body, otherweys the sighte of the eighe knoweth it, and otherweys the touchyngē. The lookyngē, by castyngē of his hemys, waiteth and seeth fro afer al the body togidre, withoute moevyngē of it-self; but the touchyngē clyveth and conioyneth to the rounde body, and moeveth aboute the envyrounyngē, and comprehendeth by parties the roundnesse. And the man hym-self, ootherweys wit byholdeth hym, and ootherweys ymaginacioun, and otherweys resoun, and ootherweies intelligence. For the wit comprehendith withoute-forth the figure of the body of the man that is establisschid in the matere subgett; [1790] but the ymaginacioun comprehendith oonly the figure withoute the matere; resoun surmountith ymaginacioun and comprehendith by an universel lokyngē the comune spece that is in the singuler peeces; but the eighe of the intelligence is heyere, for it surmountith the envyrounyngē of the universite, and loketh over that bi pure subtilte of thought thilke same symple forme of man that is perdurably in the devyne thought. In whiche this oughte gretly to ben considered, that the heyeste strengthe to comprehendē thinges embraseth and contienith the lowerest strengthe; but the lowerest strengthe ne ariseth nat in no manere to the heyere strengthe. For wit ne mai no thing comprehende out of matere ne the ymaginacioun loketh nat the universels speeces, ne resoun ne

1786. *schal mowen schewen*, may be made clear.

1789. *wit*, ‘sensus.’

1790. *ymaginacioun*, ‘imaginatio.’

1791. *resoun*, ‘ratio.’

1791. *specer*, ‘speciem.’

1792. *singular peeces*, ‘singularibus.’

1792. *eighe of the intelligence*, ‘intelligentiæ oculus.’

taketh nat the symple forme so as intelligence takith it; but intelligence, that lookith al aboven, whanne it hath comprehendeth the forme, it knoweth and demyth alle the thinges that ben undir that foorme. [1795] But sche knoweth hem in thilke manere in the whiche it comprehendeth thilke same symple forme that ne may nevere ben knowen to noon of that othere (that is to seyn, to none of the thre forseide strengthis of the soule). For it knoweth the universite of resoun, and the figure of ymaginacioun, and the sensible material conceyved by wit; ne it ne useth nat nor of resoun ne of ymaginacioun ne of wit withoute-forth; but it byholdeth alle thingis, so as I schal seie, by a strook of thought formely withoute discours or collacioun. Certes resoun, whan it lokith any thing universel, it ne useth nat of ymaginacioun, nor of wit; and algates yit it comprehendith the thingis ymaginable and sensible. For resoun is she that diffynyscheth the universel of here conceyte ryght thus: -- Man is a resonable two-foted beest. [1800] And howso that this knowynge is universel, yit is ther no wyght that ne wot wel that a man is a thing ymaginable and sensible; and this same considereth wel resoun; but that nis nat by ymaginacioun nor by wit, but it lookith it by resonable concepcioun. Also ymaginacioun, albeit so that it takith of wit the bygynnynges to seen and to writen the figures, algates althoughe that wit ne were nat present, yit it envyrowneth and comprehendith alle thingis sensible; nat by resoun sensible of demynge, but by resoun ymaginatyf. Seestow nat thanne that alle the thingis in knowynge usen more of hir faculte or of hir power than thei don of the faculte or power of thingis that ben I-knowe? Ne that nis nat wrong; for so as every judgement is the dede or the doying of hym that demeth, it byhoveth that every

wyght performe the werk and his entencioun, nat of foreyne power, but of his propre power. [1805]

'Quondam porticus attulit.'—Metrum 4

The porche (that is to seyn a gate of the toun of Athenis there as philosophris hadden hir congregacioun to desputen)—thilke porche broughte somtyme olde men, ful dirke in hir sentences (that is to seyn philosophris that hyghten Stoyccenis), that wenden that ymages and sensibilities (that is to seyn, sensible ymaginaciouns or ellis ymaginaciouns of sensible thingis) weren emprientid in-to soules fro bodies withoute-forth; (as who seith that thilke Stoyccenis wenden that sowle had ben nakid of it-self, as a mirour or a clene parchemyn, so that alle figures most first comen fro thingis fro withoute in-to soules, and ben emprientid in-to soules); ryght as we ben wont somtyme by a swilt poyntel to fycchen lettres emprientid in the smothnesse or in the pleynesse of the table of wax or in parchemyn that ne hath no figure ne note in it. (Glose. But now argueth Boece ayens that opynioun and seith thus:) [1810] But yif the thryvyng soule ne unpliteth no thing (that is to seyn, ne doth no thing) by his propre moevynges, but suffrieth and lith subgit to the figures and to the notes of bodies withoute-forth, and yeldith ymages ydel and vein in the manere of a mirour, whennes thryveth thanne or whennes comith thilke knowynge in our soule, that discernith and byholdith alle thinges? And whennes is thilke strengthe that byholdeth the singular thinges? Or whennes is the strengthe that devydeith thinges I-knowe; and thilke strengthe that gadreth togidre the thingis devyded; and the strengthe that chesith his entrechaunged wey? For somtyme it hevyth up the heued (that is

1798. *formely*, 'formaliter.'

1803. *nat by resoun*, etc., mistranslation of 'non sensibili sed imaginaria ratione (method) judicandi.'

1805. *the werk and his entencioun*, 'suam operam.'

1813. *his entrechaunged wey*, 'alternumque legens iter.'

to seyn that it hevyth up the entencioun to ryght heye thinges), and som tyme it descendith in-to ryght lowe thinges; and whan it retorneth in-to hym-self it reproveth and destroyeth the false thingis by the trewe thinges. [1815] Certes this strengthe is cause more effcent, and mochel more myghty to seen and to knowe thinges, than thilke cause that suffrith and receyveth the notes and the figures empressid in manere of matere. Algaits the passion (that is to seyn the suffraunce or the wit) in the quyke body goth bysorn, excitynge and moevynge the strengthes of the thought. Ryght so as whan that cleernesse smyteth the eyen and moeveth hem to seen, or ryght so as voys or soun hurteleth to the eres and commoeveth hem to herkne; than is the strengthe of the thought I-moevid and excited, and clepith forth to semblable moevynge the spesces that it halt withynne it-self, and addith tho spesces to the notes and to the thinges withoute-forth, and medleth the ymagis of thinges withoute-forth to the formes I-hidd withynne hym-self. [1820]

'*Quod si in corporibus sentiendis.*'—

Prosa 5

But what yif that in bodyes to ben feled (that is to seyn, in takynge of knowlechyng of bodily thinges), and albeit so that qualites of bodies that ben obiect fro withoute-forth moeven and entalten the instrumentes of the wittes, and albeit so that the passioun of the body (that is to seyn, the wit or the suffraunce) goth to-forne the strengthe of the wirkyng corage, the whiche passioun or suffraunce clepith forth the dede of the thought in hym-self and moeveth and exciteth in this mene-while the formes

1816. *in manere of matere.* Construe with *receyveth*.

1818. *hurteleth.* C₁ A₂ *hurleth*, H Cx. *hurleth*.

1821. *But what yif that,* '*Quod si.*'

1821. *and albeit so that,* '*quammis*'; and is a strengthening particle, *i.e.* even though; likewise in *and if*, 1825.

that resten within-forth—and yif that in sensible bodies, as I have seid, our corage nis nat y-taught or emprinted by passioun to knowe these thinges, but demeth and knoweth of his owne strengthe the passioun or suffraunce subiect to the body, [1825] moche more than the thingis that ben absolut and quit fro alle talentes or affeccions of bodyes (as god or his aungelis) ne folwen nat in discernynge thinges obiect fro withoute-forth, but thei acomplissen and speden the dede of hir thought. By this resoun thanne ther comen many maner knowynges to dyverse and differyng substauces. For the wit of the body, the whiche wit is naked and despoiled of alle oothre knowynges,—thilke wit cometh to beestis that ne mowen nat moeven hem-self her and ther, as oistres and muscles and oothir swich schelle fyssche of the see, that clyven and ben norisschid to roches. But the ymaginacioun cometh to remuable bestis, that semen to han talent to fleen or to desiren any thing. But resoun is al oonly to the lynage of mankynde, ryght as intelligence is oonly the devyne nature. [1830] Of whiche it folweth that thilke knowyng is more worth than thise oothre, syn it knoweth by his propre nature nat oonly his subget (as who seith, it ne knoweth nat al oonly that apertenith properly to his knowynge) but it knoweth the subiect of alle oothre knowynges. But how schal it thanne be, yif that wit and ymaginacioun stryven ayein resonyng, and seyn that, of thilke universel thinges that resoun wenith to seen, that it nis ryght naught? For wit and ymaginacioun seyn that that is sensible or ymaginable, it ne mai nat ben universel. Thanne is either the jugement of resoun soth ne that ther nis no thing sensible; or elles, for that resoun woot wel that many thinges ben subiect to wit and to ymaginacioun, thanne is the

1825. *y-taught or emprinted*, '*insignitur*'; the rest of the phrase is from the Fr, hence the confusion.

1826. *things* is object of *folwen*.

1833. *that that is*, that what is.

concepcioun of resoun veyn and fals, whiche that lokith and comprehendith that that is sensible and singuler as universel. [1835] And yif that resoun wolde answeere ayein to thise two (that is to seyn, to wit and to ymaginacioun), and seyn, that sothly sche hir-selve (that is to seyn, resoun) lokith and comprehendith, by resoun of universalite, bothe that that is sensible and that that is ymaginable; and that thilke two (that is to seyn, wit and ymaginacioun) ne mowen nat strechen ne enhaunsen hem-self to knowynge of universalite, for that the knowynge of hem ne mai exceden ne surmounten the bodily figures: certes of the knowynge of thinges, men oughten rather even credence to the more stidfast and to the more parfit jugement. In this manere stryvyng thanne we that han strengthe of resonynge and of ymagynynge and of wit (that is to seyn, by resoun and by ymaginacioun and by wit)—we scholde rathir preise the cause of resoun (as who seith, than the cause of wit and of ymaginacioun). [1840]

Semblable thing is it, that the resoun of mankynde ne weneth nat that the devyne intelligence byholdeth or knoweth thingis to comen, but ryght as the resoun of mankynde knoweth hem. For thou arguist and seist thus: that if it ne seme nat to men that some thingis han certeyn and necessarie betydynges, thei ne mowen nat ben wist byforn certainly to betyden, and thanne nis ther no prescience of thilke thinges; and yif we trowe that prescience be in thise thingis, thanne is ther nothing that it ne bytydeth by necessite. But certes yif we myghten han the jugement of the devyne thought, as we ben parsoners of resoun, ryght so as we han demyd that it byhovith that ymaginacioun and wit ben bynethe resoun, ryght so wolde we demen that it were ryghtfull thing, that mannys resoun oughte to summytten it-self and to ben bynethe the devyne thought. [1845] For whiche yif

that we mowen (as who seith that, if that we mowen, I conseile that) we enhaunse us in-to the heighte of thilke sovereign intelligence; for ther schal resoun wel seen that that it ne mai nat byholden in it-self. And certes that is this, in what manere the prescience of god seeth alle thinges certains and diffinyssched, althoughe thei ne han no certein issues or bytydyngis; ne this nis noon opinioun, but it is rather the simplicité of the sovereign science, that nis nat enclosed nor I-schet withinne none boundes.

'Quam variis figuris.'—Metrum 5

The beestes passen by the erthes be ful diverse figures. For some of hem han hir bodyes straught, and crepyn in the dust, and drawn afir hem a traas or a furwe I-contynued (that is to seyn, as naddres or snakes); [1850] and oothre beestis, by the wandrynge lyghtnesse of hir wynges beten the wyndes, and overswymmen the spaces of the longe eir by moyst fleyng; and oothere bestes gladen hem self to diggen hir traas or hir stepys in the erthe with hir goinges or with hir feet, and to gon either by the grene feeldes, or elles to walken undir the wodes. And al be it so that thou seest that thei alle discorden by diverse foormes, algatis hir faces enclyned hevvyeth hir dulle wittes. Only the lynage of man heveth heyst his heic heved, and stondith light with his upryght body, and byholdeth the erthes undir hym. And, but yif thou, erthly man, waxest yvel out of thi wit, this figure amonesteth the, that axest the hevene with thi ryghte visage, and hast areised thi forheved to beren up an hye thi corage, [1855] so that thi thought ne be nat I-hevved ne put lowe undir fote, syn that thi body is so heyghe areysed.

1849. This metre is very badly translated.

1850. *passen by*, 'passent . . . par,' 'permeant.'

1851. *by the wandrynge*, etc., 'alarum levitas vagans.'

1851. *moyst fleyng*, 'liquido volatu.'

1852. *to walken undir*, etc., 'subire silvas.'

1836. The apodosis begins with *certes*, 1838.

1844. *parsoners of*, sharers in.

'*Quoniam igitur uti paulo ante.*'—Prosa 6

Therefore thanne, as I have schewed a litel here byforne that alle thing that is I-wist nis nat known by his nature propre, but by the nature of hem that comprehenden it, lat us loke now, in as mochil as it is lefevel to us (as who seith, lat us loke now as we mowen) whiche that the estat is of the devyne substaunce; so that we mowe eek known what his science is. The comune judgement of alle creatures resonables thanne is this: that god is eterne. Lat us considere thanne what is eternite; for certes schal schewen us togidre the devyne nature and the devyne science. [1860] Eternite thanne is parfit possession and altogidre of lif interminable. And that schewethe more cleerly by the comparysoun or collacioun of temporel thinges. For alle thing that lyveth in tyme, it is present, and procedith fro preterites into futures (that is to seyn, fro tyme passed into tyme comynge), ne ther nis nothing established in tyme that mai enbrasen togidre al the space of his lif. For certis yit ne hath it nat taken the tyme of tomorwe, and it hath lost that of ysterday. And certes in the lif of this dai ye ne lyve no more but right as in this moevable and transitorie moment. [1865] Thanne thilke thing that suffreth temporel condicioun, althoughe that it nevere bygan to be, ne thoughe it nevere ne cese for to be, as Aristotile demed of the world, and althoughe that the lif of it be strecchid with infinite of tyme; yit algatis nis it nat swich thing that men mighten trowen by ryghte that it is eterne. For althoughe that it comprehende and embrace the space of lif infinit, yit algatis ne enbraseth it nat the space of the lif altogidre; for it ne hath nat the futuris that ne ben nat yit, ne it ne hath no lengere the preterites that ben I-doon or I-passed. But thilke thing thanne that hath and comprehendith togidre al the

plente of the lif interminable, to whom ther ne faileth naught of the future, and to whom ther nis noight of the preteryt escaped nor I-passed, thilke same is I-witnessed and I-procvid by right to ben eterne; [1870] and yit it byhovith by necessite that thilke thing be alwey present to hym-self, and compotent (as who seith, alwey present to hym-selve, and so myghty that al be right at his plesaunce), and that he have al present the infinite of the moevable tyme. Wherefore som men trowen wrongfully that, when thei heren that it semede to Plato that this world ne hadde nevere bygynnyng of tyme, ne that it nevere schal han failynge, thei wenen in this manere that this world be makid coeterne with his makere. (As who seith, thei wene that this world and god ben makid togidre eterne, and that is a wrongful wenynge.) For other thing is it to ben I-lad by lif interminable, as Plato grauntide to the world, and oothir is it to enbrace togidre al the presence of the lif intermynable, the whiche thing it is cleer and manyfest that it is propre to the devyne thought. [1875] Ne it ne scholde nat semen to us that god is elders than thinges that ben I-maked by quantite of tyme, but rather by the proprete of his simple nature. For this ilke infinit moevynge of temporel thinges folweth this presentarie estat of the lif unmoevable; and, so as it ne mai nat contrefetin it, ne scynen it, ne be evene lik to it, for the immoevablete (that is to sein, that is in the eternite of god), it faileth and fallith into moevynge fro the simplicitie of the presence of god, and discesith into the infinit quantite of future and of preterit. And so as it ne mai nat han togidre al the plente of the lif, algates yit for as moche as it ne ceseth nevere for to ben in som manere, it semyth somdel to us that it folwith and resembleth thilke thing that it ne mai nat atayne to, ne

1860. *nature* and *science* are the subjects of *schewen*.

1877. *folweth*, 'imitatur.'
1878. *discrevith* (C₂ A₁ H Cx. A₂ B *discreveth*), 'describit.'

fulfillen; and byndeth it-self to som maner presence of this litle and swift moment, the whiche presence of this litle and swift moment, [1880] for that it bereth a maner ymage or liknesse of the ai duellynge presence of god, it grauntith to swich manere thinges as it betydyth to, that it semeth hem that thise thinges han I-ben and ben. And for that the presence of swiche litel moment ne mai nat duelle, therfore it ravysse and took the infynit way to tyme (that is to seyn, by successioun). And by this manere is it I-doon, for that it sholde contynue the lif in goinge, of the whiche lif it myght nat embrace the plente in duellinge. And for-thi yif we wollen putten worthi names to thinges and folwen Plato, lat us seyn thanne sothly that god is "eterne," and that the world is "perpetuel." Thanne, syn that every jugement knoweth and comprehendith by his owne nature thinges that ben subject unto hym, ther is sothly to god alweys an eterne and presentarie estat; [1885] and the science of hym that overpasseth alle temporel moevment duelleth in the simplicitie of his presence, and embraceth and considereth alle the infynit spaces of tymes preterites and futures, and lokith in his simple knowynge alle thingis of preterit ryght as thei weren I-doon presently ryght now. Yif thou wolt thanne thinken and avise the prescience by whiche it knoweth alle thinges, thou ne schalt naught demen it as prescience of thinges to comen, but thou schalt demen more ryghtfully that it is science of presence or of instaunce that nevere ne failleth. For whiche it nis nat y-cleped "providence," but it sholde rathir ben clepid "purveance," that is establisshed ful fer fro ryght lowe thinges, and byholdeth fro afer alle thinges, right as it were fro the heye heighte of thinges. [1890]

Why axestow thanne, or whi desputestow thanne, that thilke thingis ben doon by necessite whiche that ben y-seyn and known by the devyne sighte, syn

1888. *avise*, consider.

that forsothe men ne maken nat thilke thingis necessarie whiche that thei seen ben I-doon in hir sighte? For addith thi byholdynge any necessite to thilke thinges that thou byholdest present?

'Nay,' quod I.

Philosophie. 'Certes thanne, yif men myghte maken any digne comparysoun or collacioun of the presence devyne and of the presence of mankynde; ryght so as ye seen some thinges in this temporel present, ryght so seeth god alle thinges by his eterne present. [1895]

Wherefore this devyne presence ne chaungeth nat the nature ne the proprete of thinges, but byholdeth swiche thingis present to hymward as thei shollen betyde to yowward in tyme to comen. Ne it ne confowndeth nat the jugementes of thingis; but by o sight of his thought he knoweth the thinges to comen, as wol necessarie as nat necessarie. Ryght so as whan ye seen togidre a man walke on the erthe and the sonne arisen in the hevене, albeit so that ye seen and byholden the ton and the tothir togidre, yit natheles ye demen and discerne that the toon is voluntarie and the tother is necessarie. Ryght so thanne the devyne lookynge, byholdynge alle thinges undir hym, ne trowbleth nat the qualite of thinges that ben certainly present to hymward; but, as to the condicioun of tyme, forsothe thei ben futur. [1900] For which it folweth that this nis noon opynioun, but rathir a stidfast knowynge I-strengthid by soothnesse that, whan that god knoweth any thing to be, he ne unwot not that thilke thing wanteth necessite to be. (This is to sein that whan that god knoweth any thing to betide, he wot wel that it ne hath no necessite to betyde.) And yif thou seist here that thilke thing that god seeth to

1895. *presence* both times seems to be a mistake for *presente*; Lat. 'presentis,' Fr. 'present.'

1896. *presence* should be *prescience*, 'prænotio,' 'prescience.' In 1931 H reads *prescience* for *presence*, and similarly H Cx. in 1932 have *prescience* for *presence*.

1900. *trowbleth*, 'perturbat'; Fr. 'trouble,' L. 'destourbe.'

1902. *ne unwot not*, 'non nesciat.'

betide, it ne may nat unbytide (as who seith, it moot bytide), and thilke thing that ne mai nat unbytide, it mot bytiden by necessite, and that thou streyne me to this name of necessite, certes I wol we confessen and byknowen a thing of ful sad trouthe. But unnethe schal ther any wight mowe seen it or come therto, but yif that he be byholdere of the devyne thought. [1905] For I wol answeren the thus: that thilke thing that is futur, whan it is referred to the devyne knowynge than is it necesserie; but certis whan it is undirstonden in his owene kynde, men seen it outrely fre and absolut fro alle necessite.

For certes ther ben two maneris of necessites: that oon necessite is symple, as thus; that it byhovith by necessite that alle men ben mortal or dedly; anothir necessite is condicionel, as thus: yif thou wost that a man walketh, it byhovith by necessite that he walke. Thilke thing thanne that any wight hath I-knowe to be, it ne mai ben noon oothir weys thanne he knowith it to be. [1910] But this condicion draweth nat with hir thilke necessite simple; for certes this necessite condicionel—the propre nature of it ne makith it nat, but the adieccioun of the condicioun makith it. For no necessite ne constreyneth a man to gon that goth by his propre wil, al be it so that whan he goth that it is necessarie that he goth. Ryght on this same manere thanne, yif that the purveaunce of god seeth any thyng present, than moot thilke thing ben by necessite, althoghe that it ne have no necessite of his owne nature. But certes the futures that bytiden by fredom of arbitrie, god seth hem alle togidre presentes. These things thanne, yf thei ben referrid to the devyne sighte, than ben they makid necessarye by the condicioun of the devyne knowynge. [1915] But certes yif thilke thingis ben considered by hem-self, thei ben absolut of necessite,

and ne forleten nat ne cesen nat of the liberte of hir owne nature. Thanne certes withoute doute alle the thinges shollen ben doon whiche that god woot byforn that thei ben to comen. But some of hem comen and bytiden of fre arbitrie or fre wil, that, al be it so that thei bytiden, yit algates ne lese thei nat hir propre nature in beinge; by the whiche first, or that thei weren I-don, thei hadden power noght to han bytyd.'

'What is this to seyn thanne,' quod I, 'that thinges ne ben nat necesserie by hir propre nature, so as thei comen in alle maneris in the liknesse of necessite by the condicioun of the devyne science?'

'This is the difference,' quod sche, 'that tho thinges that I purposide the a litel her byforn (that is to seyn, the sonne arysynge and the man walkynge), that ther whiles that thilke thinges ben I-doon, they ne myghte nat ben undoon; [1920] natheles that oon of hem, or it was I-doon, it byhovide by necessite that it was I-doon, but nat that oothir. Ryght so is it here, that the thinges that god hath present withoute doute thei shollen ben. But some of hem descendith of the nature of thinges (as the sonne arysynge); and some descendith of the power of the doeris (as the man walkynge). Thanne seide I no wrong that, yif that these thinges ben referred to the devyne knowynge, thanne ben thei necessarie; and yif thei ben considered by hem-self, than ben thei absolut fro the boond of necessite. Right so as alle thingis that apiereth or scheweth to the wittes, yif thou referre it to resoun, it is universel; and yif thou loke it or referre it to itself, than is it singuler. But now yif thou seist thus: that, "If it be in my power to chaunge my purpos, than schal I voiden the purveaunce of god, whan peraventure I schal han chaungid the thingis that he knoweth byforn," [1925] thanne schal I answeren the thus: "Certes thou maist wel chaungen

1914. *presentes* (C₃ A₂ H B *present*); Lat. 'presentes,' Fr. 'presens.' Chaucer probably carried over the French adjective.

1919. C₁ B H Cx. omit *the before condicioun*. 1924. *alle thingis*, 'tout'; perhaps therefore the 'it's ('le') that follow.

thi purpos; but for as mochel as the present sothnesse of the devyne purveaunce byholdeth that thou maist chaunge thi purpos, and whethir thou wolt chaunge it or no, and whiderward that thou torne it, thou ne maist nat eschuen the devyne prescience, ryght as thou ne maist nat fleen the sighte of the present eye, althoghe that thou torne thiself by thi fre wil into diverse accions." But thou maist sein ayein: "How schal it thanne be—schal nat the devyne science ben chaunged by my disposicioun whan that I wol o thing now and now anothir; and thilke prescience—ne semeth it nat to entrechaunge stoundis of knowynge?" (As who seith, ne schal it nat seme to us that the devyne prescience entrechaungith hise diverse stoundes of knowynge, so that it knowe som-tyme o thyng, and somtyme the contrarie?) [1930]

'No,' quod I.

'No forsothe,' quod sche, 'for the devyne sighte renneth to-forn, and seeth alle futures, and clepith hem ayein, and retorneth hem to the presence of his propre knowynge; ne he ne entrechaungith nat, so as thou weneest, the stoundes of foreknowynge, as now this, now that; but he ay duellynge cometh byforn, and enbraseth at o strook alle thi mutaciouns. And this presence to comprehendend and to seen alle thingis—god ne hath nat taken it of the bytidynge of thinges to come, but of his propre symplicite. And herby is assoiled thilke thing that thou putttest a litel here byforn, that is to seyn,

1930. *stoundes*, 'vices.'

1933. *presence to comprehendend*, etc., 'presence de . . . comprehendre,' i.e. power to comprehend thingis in present time.

that it is unworthy thing to seyn that our futures yeven cause of the science of god. For certis this strengthe of the devyne science, whiche that embraseth alle thinges by his presentarie knowynge, establisseth manere to alle thinges, and it ne oweth nawht to lattere thinges. [1935] And syn that thise thinges ben thus (that is to seyn, syn that necessite nis nat in thinges by the devyne prescience), thanne is ther fredom of arbitre, that duelleth hool and unwemmed to mortal men; ne the lawes ne purposen nat wikkidly medes and peynes to the willynges of men, that ben unbownden and quyt of all necessite; and god, byholdere and forwytere of alle thingis, duelleth above, and the present eternite of his sighte renneth alwey with the diverse qualite of our dedes, dispensynge and ordeynynge medes to gode men and tormentes to wikkide men. Ne in ydel ne in veyn ne ben ther put in god hope and preyeris, that ne mowen nat ben unspedful ne withouten effect whan they been ryghtful.

'Withstond thanne and eschue thou vices; worschiþe and love thou vertues; arcise thi corage to ryghtful hopes; yilde thou humble preieres an heyghe. [1940] Gret necessite of prowessse and vertu is encharged and comaunded to yow, yif ye nil nat dissimulen; syn that ye worken and don (that is to seyn, your dedes or your werkes) byforn the eyen of the juge that seeth and demeth alle thinges.'

EXPLICIT LIBER BOECII.

1935. *manere*, 'modum,' 'propre maniere' rather *bound*.

1935. *lattere thinges*, 'posterioribus.'

TROIILUS AND CRISEYDE

BOOK I

THE doublé sorwe of Troilus to tellen,
That was the king Priamus' sone of

Troye,

In loving how his aventurés fellen
Fro wo to wele, and after out of joye,
My purpos is, or that I partè fro ye.—
Thesiphoné, thou help me for t' endite
Thise woful vers, that wepen as I write !

To thee clepe I, thou Goddesse of
tormént, 8

Thou cruel Furie, sorwing evere in payne !
Help me that am the sorwful instrument
That helpeth lovers, as I can, to pleyne !
For wel sit it, the sothè for to seyne,
A woful wight to han a drery fere,
And to a sorwful tale, a sory chere !

For I, that God of Lovés servants serve,
Ne dar to Love for myn unlikliness
Preyn for sped, al sholde I therfor sterve,
So fer am I from his help in derknésse :
But nathéles, if this may don gladnésse
Unt' any lover and his cause availe, 20
Have he my thank, and myn be this
travaile !

But ye lovéres, that bathen in gladnésse,
If any drope of pité in you be,
Remembreth you on passéd heviness
That ye han felt, and on th' adversité
Of other folk ; and thenketh how that ye
Han felt that Lové dorstè you displese,
Or ye han wonne him with too gret an
ese.

And preyèth for hem that ben in the cas
Of Troilus, as ye may after here, 30
That Love hem bringe in hevené to solás ;

For relations of MSS. and letters by which
they are quoted, see Introduction.

6. *Thesiphoné*, *Tisiphoné*.

21. *hé*, i.e. Love.

And ek for me preyèth to God so dere
That I have might to shewe in som manére
Swich payne and wo as Lovés folk endure,
In Troilus' unsely aventure.

And biddeth ek for hem that ben de-
speyred

In love, that neveré n'il recoveréd be,
And ek for hem that falsly ben apeyred
Thorough wikked tongès, be it he or she ;
Thus biddeth God for his benigneté 40
So graunte hem soone out of this world
to pace,

That ben despeyred out of Lovés grace.

And biddeth ek for hem that ben at ese
That God hem graunte ay good per-
séveraunce,

And sende hem might hir ladies so to plesse
That it to Love be worship and plesaunce.
For so hope I my soulé best t'avaunce,
To preye for hem that Lovés servants be,
And write hir wo, and live in charité,

And for to have of hem compassioun 50
As though I were hir owné brother dere.—
Now herkneth with a good entencionn,
For now wol I gon streight to my matére,
In which ye may the doublé sorwes here
Of Troilus in loving of Criseyde,
And how that she forsook him or she
deyde.

—It is wel wist how that the Grekés
stronge

In armés with a thousand shippés wente
To Troyewardlès, and the cité longe

44. *a* In love, that God hem graunte per-
severaunce.

45. *ladies*, *a* and others *loves*.

47. *t'avaunce*, J Cp. Cl. *avaunce*.

52. *herkneth*. Shows that *Troilus* was written
for recitation. See l. 450 ; ii. 30, 1751 ; iii. 499,
1332. But see later, v. 270.

Assegeden wel ten yer or they stente, 60
And in diversé wise and oon entente
The ravissing to wreken of Eleyne
By Paris don, they wroughten al hir peyne.

Now fil it so, that in the town ther was
Dwelling a lord of gret auctorité,
A gret devyn that clepéd was Calcas,
That in sciéce so expert was, that he
Knew wel that Troyé sholde destroyed be
By answer of his God, that lighté thus,
Daun Phebus, or Appollo Delphicus. 70

So when that Calcas knew by calculinge,
And ek by answer of this Appollo,
That Grekés sholden swich a peplé bringe
Thorough which that Troyémósté be for-do,
He caste anon out of the town to go;
For wel wiste he by sort that Troyé sholde
Destroyed ben, ye, worldé who-so n'olde.

For-which for to departen softely
Took purpos ful this fór-knowingé wise,
And to the Grekés oost ful privily 80
He stal anon; and they in curteys wise
Him deden bothé worship and scrvice,
In trust that he hath konning hem to rede
In every peril which that is to drede.

The noise up ros, whan it was first aspyed
Thorough al the town, and generaly was
spoken,
That Calcas traytour fled was and allyed
With hem of Grece; and casten to ben
wroken

On him that falsly hadde his feyth so
broken,
And seyden he and al his kyn at onés 90
Ben worthy for to brennen fel and bonés.

Now haddé Calcas left in this mischaunce,
Al unwist of this false and wikked dede,
His doughter, which that was in gret
penaunce;

60. *wel*, H₁ γ *nigh*.

71. *that*, ay *this*.

83. *a flopyng in hym (good?) kunnyng hem to rede*. Boc. Da lui sperando sommo e buon consiglio.

85. *The noise up ros, a Gret rumour gan (was)*. Boc. Fu rumor grande.

87. γ insert *fals* after *traytour*.

93. *Al unwist, a Unknowing*.

For of her lif she was ful sore in drede
As she that n'isté what was best to rede;
For bothe a widwé was she, and alone
Of any frend, to whom she dorste her
mone.

Criseyde was this lady name al right:
As to my dom in al Troyés cité 100
N'as non so fair; for, passing every
wight,

So angelik was hir natif beauté,
That lik a thing immortal seméd she,
As is an hevenissh parfit créature
That down were sent in scorning of natüre.

This lady, which that herde al-day at ere
Her fadres shame, his falsnesse and tresoun,
Wel nigh out of her wit for sorwe and fere,
In widwes habit large of samyt broun,
On knees she fil biforn Ectór a-doun 110
With pitous vois, and tendrely wepinge
His mercy bad, her-selven éxcusinge.

Now was this Ector pitous of natüre,
And saw that she was sorwfully bigon,
And that she was so fair a créature;
(Of his goodnése he gladéd her anon,
And seyde, 'Lat your fadres treson gon
Forth with mischaunce! And ye yourself
in joye
Dwelleth with us whil you good list in
Troye!

'And al th' honóur that men may don you
have, 120
As ferforth as your fader dwelléd here,
Ye shul han, and your body shal men save
As fer as I may aught enquire and here.'
And she him thankéd with ful humblé
chere,

101. *passing, a over* (H₄ omits).

104. *is, ay doth*.

106. *herde al-day*, γ and others *al-day herde*.

109. *large*, J G H₅ H₃ *blak*.

111. *a With chere and voys ful pitous, and wepyng*. Boc. E lagrimosa . . . e con voce e con vista assai pietosa.

118. *Forth with mischaunce, a To sory haf*.

123. *and*, γ and others *or*.

124. *a thanked ofte in humble chere*. Boc.

Filla di questo li ringrazio assai
E più volea.

And ofter wolde and it had ben his wille,
And took her leve, and hom, and held
her stille.

And in her hous sh' abood with swich
meyné

As til her honour nedè was to holde,
And whil she was dwellinge in that cité
Kepte her estat, and bothe of yonge and
olde 130

Ful wel beloved, and wel men of her
tolde.

But whether that she children hadde or non,
I rede it nat; therfor I lete it gon.

The thingès fellen as they don of werre
Bytwixen hem of Troye and Grekès ofte;
For som day boughten they of Troye it
derre,

And eft the Grekès founden nothing softe
The folk of Troye. And thus Fortúne
on-lofte,

And under eft, gan hem to wheelen bothe
After her cours, ay whil they weren
wrothe. 140

But how this town com to destruccioun
Ne falleth naught to purpos me to telle,
For it were here a long digressioun
Fro my matère, and for you long to dwelle.
But the Trojánès gestès, as they felle,
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,
Who-so that can may rede hem as they
write.

But though that Grekès hem of Troye
shetten,

And hir cité bysegéd al aboute,
Hir olde usagé n'oldè they nat letten 150
As for t' honoure hir Goddès ful devoute;

132. This may be due to Chaucer's mis-reading Boccaccio, who says 'she had no need to care for son or daughter.'

140. J and others *ay whil that they were wrothe*.

143. *For it were here*, so B; *a For-why it were*;
γ *For it were*.

144. *for you long to dwelle*, so H₂ (see H.F. i. 252); rest var.

145. *Trojánès*, so P H₂ R; Cl. *Troiane*; rest *Troian*.

146. *Dares* and *Dite*, Dares and Dictys, supposed writers on the Trojan war.

151. *a goddes and to loute*.

But aldermost in honour, out of doute,
They hadde a relik, heet Palladion,
That was hir trust aboven everychon.

And so bifil whan comen was the time
Of Apéril, when clothéd is the mede
With newè grene, of lusty Ver the prime,
And swotè smelling flourès white and rede,
In sondry wises shewéd, as I rede,
The folk of Troye hir observaunces olde,
Palladionès festé for to holde. 161

And to the temple in al hir besté wise
In general ther wenté mony a wight
To herkennen of Palladion servise;
And namèly so mony a lusty knight,
So mony a lady fressh and mayden bright,
Ful wel arayéd bothé meste and leste,
Ye, bothé for the seson and the feste.

Among thise othré folk was Criseydá
In widwes habit blak; but nathéles, 170
Right as our firsté lettre is now an A,
In beauté first so stood she makélès:
Her goodly loking gladéd al the prees:
N'as neveré seyn thing to ben praysdé derre,
Nor under cloudé blak so bright a sterre,

As was Criseyde, as folk seyde everychone
That her behelden in her blaké wede.
And yit she stood ful lowe and stille alone
Behinden othré folk in litel brede 179
And nigh the dore, ay under shamés drede,
Simple of atir and debonaire of chere,
With ful assuréd loking and manére.

This Troilus, as he was wont to gide
His yongé knightés, ladde hem up and down
In th'ilk largé temple on every side,
Biholding ay the ladies of the toun,
Now here, now there; for no devocioun

153. *Palladion*, the Palladium or sacred image of Pallas.

156. *April*, a *Apparaille* (possibly intended as a pun. See iii. 353).

158. *smelling*, so a Cx. D; J and others *smellen*.
Boc. *Riveste i prati d' erbette e di fiori*.

167. *Jo. the before meste and leste*; *a Ful wel biseyn the meste, mene and leste*; γ *Ful wel arayéd bothe meste, meyne and leste*.

174. *neveré seyn*, so a Cx. Ad. H₃; J and others *neveré yet seyn*.

183. *This*, a *Daun*.

Hadde he to non, to reven him his reste,
But gan to preyse and lakken whom him
leste.

And in his walk ful faste he gan to wayten
If knight or squier of his companye 197
Gan for to sike or lete his yēn bayten
On any woman that he coude espye :
He woldē smile and holden it folye,
And seye him thus, ' God wot, she slepeth
softe

For love of thee, whan thou tornest ful ofte!

' I have herd told, pardieus, of your livinge,
Ye lovers, and your lewēd observancees,
And which a labour folk han in winnunge
Of love, and in the keping which dout-
aunces ; 200
And whan your preye is lost, wo and pen-
aunces !

O verray foolēs, nyce and blynd ben ye !
Ther n'is nat oon can war by other be !'

And with that word he gan caste up the
browe
Ascaunces, ' Lo ! is this nat wislyspoken ?'
At which the God of Love gan loken rowe
Right for despit, and shop for to ben wroken :
He kidde anon his bowē n'as nat broken !
For sodeinly he hitte him at the fulle ;
And yit as proud a peccok can he pulle !

O blindē world ! O blinde entencioun ! 211
How often falleth al th' effect contraire
Of surquidrye and foul presumpcioun ;
For caught is proud, and caught is de-
bonaire !

This Troilus is clomben on the staire,
And litel weneth that he mot descenden !
But alday failleth thing that foolēs wenden !

As proudē Bayard ginneth for to skippe
Out of the wey, so priketh him his corn,

195. *softe*, J Cx. G S *ful softe*.

198. *lewēd*, γ om.

202, 203. α reads :

O verrey folys I may ye no thing see ?
Kan non of yow y-war by other be ?

208, 209. α reads :

Yes, certein, Loves bowe was not y-broken !
For, by myn heud, he

215. *This*, α *Dawn*.

Til he a lasshe have of the longē whippe,
Than thenketh he, ' Though I prounce al
beforn 221

First in the trais, ful fat and newē shorn,
Yit am I but an hors, and horses lawe
I mot endure and with my ferēs drawe.'

So ferde it by this fierse and proudē knight :
Though he a worthy kingēs sonē were,
And wendē no thing haddē hadswich might
Ayein his wil, that sholde his hertē stere,
Yit with a look his hertē wex a-ferē, 229
That he that now was most in pride above
Wex sodeinly most subget unto Love.

For-thy ensaumplē taketh of this man,
Ye wisē, proudē, and worthy folkēs alle,
To scornen Love, which that so soonē can
The fredom of your hertēs to him thralle !
For evere it was, and evere it shal bifalle,
That Love is he that allē thing may binde ;
For may no man for-do the lawe of kinde.

That this be soth, hath provēd, and doth yit.
For this, tiowe I, ye known, alle or some :
Men redennat that folk han gretter wit 241
Than they that han ben most with love
y-nome ;

And strengest folk ben therwith overcome,
The worthieste and grettest of degree :
This was, and is, and yit men shal it sec.

And trewēliche it sit wel to be so ;
For alderwisest han therwith ben plesed,
And they that have ben aldermost in wo,
With love have ben confortēd most and
esēd ;

And ofte it hath the cruel herte apesēd, 250
And worthy folk maad worthier of name,
And causeth most to dreden vice and shame.

Now, sith it may nat goodly be withstonde,
And is a thing so vertuous in kinde,
Refuseth nat to Love for to be bonde,
Sin, as him-selven list, he may you binde.
The yerde is bet that bowen wol and winde,

224. *with*, α *as*.

227. *swich*, R G H, S *swich a*.

229, 231. *wex*, so H, G D ; others *wax*.

237. *alle*, J and others *al*.

257. α *Beitir is the wand*.

Than that that brest ; and therfor I you
rede
To folwen Love, that you so wel can lede.

But for to tellen forth in special ²⁶⁰
As of this king's sone of which I tolde,
And leten other thing collateral,
Of him thinke I my talé forth to holde,
Bothe of his joye and of his carés colde ;
And al his werk as touching this matére,
For I it gan, I wil ther-to refere.

Within the temple he wente him forth,
pleyinge,
This Troilus, of every wight aboute ;
On this lady, and now on that lokinge,
Whe'r-so she were of towne or of withoute ;
And upon cas bifil that thorough a route ²⁷¹
His ye percéd, and so depe it wente,
Til on Criseyde it smot, and ther it stente.

And sodeinly he wex ther-with astonéd,
And gan her bet beholde in thrifty wise.
'O mercy, God !' thoughte he, 'wher
hastow wonéd,
That art so fair and goodly to devise ?'
Ther-with his herté gan to sprede and rise ;
And softe he sikéd lest men mighte him
here, ²⁷⁹
And caughte ayein his firsté pleying chere.

She n'as nat with the leste of her statúre ;
But alle her limés so wel answeringe
Werén to wommanhode, that créature
N'as neveré lassé mannish in seminge ; ♦
And ek the puré wise of her movinge
Shewédé wel that men mighte in her gesse
Honour, estat, and wommanly noblesse.

To Troilus right wonder wel with-alle
Gan for to like her moving and her chere,
Which somdel deignous was ; for she let
falle ²⁹⁰
Her look a lite aside in swich manére

259. *β* Love ; *γ* him ; *α* Now folweth him.

261. *G* ; *γ* omit *As*.

263. *forth*, Cl. H₁ *for* ; S *forth for* ; *G* omits.

264. *joye*, J G Cl. *joyes*.

279. *he*, so *α* G ; *β* *γ* omit.

286. *α* She shewed.

288. *To*, so J H₅ *γ* ; rest *Tho*.

Ascaunces, 'What ! may I nat stonden
here ?'

And after that her loking gan she lighte,
That neveré thoughte him sen so good a
sighte.

And of her look, in him ther gan to quiken
So gret desir, and swich affeccioun,
That in his hertés botmè gan to stiken
Of her his fixe and depe inpressioun ;
And, though he erst had pouréd up and
down, ²⁹⁹

He was tho glad his hornés in to shrinke :
Unnethés wiste he how to loke or winke !

Lo ! he, that leet him-selven so conninge,
And scornéd hem that Lovés peynés dryen,
Was ful unwar that Love had his dwell-
linge

Within the subtil stremés of her yén,
That sodeynly him thoughte he felté dyen,
Right with her look, the spirit of his herte.—
Blesséd be Love, that can thus folk con-
verte !

She, this in blak, liking to Troilus ³⁰⁹
Over allé thing, he stood for to beholde ;
Ne his desir, ne wher-for he stood thus,
He neither cheré madé, ne word tolde ;
But, from a-fer his maner for to holde,
On other thing som time his look he caste,
And eft on her, whil that servisé laste.

And after this, nat fullich al a-whaped,
Out of the temple al esliche he wente,
Repenting him that he had evere y-japed
Of Lovés folk, lest fully the descente
Of scorn fille on him-self ; but what he
mente, ³²⁰

Lest it were wist on any maner side,
His wo he gan dissimulen and hide.

Whan he was fro the templé thus departed,
He streight anon unto the paleys torneth,
Right with her look thorough-shoten and
thorough-darted,

Al feyneth he in lust that he sojorneth ;
And al his chere and speche also he borneth,

307. *of*, *γ* in.

324. *α* *β* *the* (Boc.) ; Cx. *γ* *his*.

And ay of Lovés servants every while
Himself to wrye, at hem he gan to smile,

And seyde, 'Lord! so ye live al in lest, 330
Ye lovers! For the conningeste of yow
That serveth most ententifliche and best,
Him tit as often harm ther-of as prow:
Your hire is quit ayein, ye, God wot now!
Naught wel for wel, but scorn for good
servise!

In feith your ordre is ruléd in good wise!

'Innoun-certeyn ben alle your óbservaunces
But it a fewé sely pointés be; 338
Ne no thing asketh so grette áttendaunces
As doth your lay, and that knowe allé ye.
But that is nat the worsté, as mote I thé!
But, tolde I you the worsté point, I leve,
Al seyde I soth, ye wolden at me greve.

'But tak this: that ye lovers ofte eschue
Or ellés don of good entencioun,
Ful ofte thy lady wol it mis-construe,
And demé it harm by her opinioun;
And yit if she for other enchesoun
Be wroth, than shaltow han a groin anon!
Lord, wel is him that may ben of you oon!

But for al this, whan that he saw his time, 351
He held his pees; non other boote him
gainede;

For Love began his fetherés so to lime,
That wel unnethe until his folk he fainede
That othrè bisy nedés him destrainede;
For wo was him, that what to don he n'iste,
But bad his folk to gon wher that hem liste.

And whan that he in chaumbré was allone,
He down upon his beddés feet him sette;
And first he gantosike, and eft to grone, 360
And thoughte ay so on her withouten lette,
That, as he sat and wook, his spirit mette
That he her saw in temple, and al the wise
Right of her look; and gan it newe avise.

Thus gan he make a mirroure of his minde,
In which he saw al hoolly her figüre,

338. *β fewe sely*; others *sely fewe*.

345. *Or elles don, a For good, or don*.

347. *by*, so *β*; others *in*.

363. *in*, so *a*; Cx. om. *in*; *Rat*; Cl. *a*; others
and.

And that he wel coude in his herté finde!
It was to him a right good áventure
To love swich oon; and if he dede his cure
To serven her, yit mighte he falle in grace,
Or ellés for oon of her servants pace. 371

Imaginíngé that traváile nor grame
Ne mighté for so goodly oon be lorn
As she, ne him for his desir no shame,
Al were it wist, but in pris and up-born
Of allé lovers wel more than biforn,—
Thus argueded he in his ginninge,
Ful unaviséd of his wo comíng.

Thus took he purpos Lovés craft to suwe,
And thoughte he woldé werken prively 380
First for to hiden his desir in muwe
From every wight y-born al outrély,
But he might caught recoveréd ben ther-by;
Remembring him, that love too wide y-
blowe
Yelt bittréfruit, though sweté seed be sowe.

And over al this, ful muchel more he
thoughte,
What for to speke, and what to holden
inne;

And what to arten her to love he soughte,
And on a song anon right to beginne, 389
And gan loude on his sorwé for to winne;
For with good hope he gan fullliche assente
Criseyde for to love, and naught repente.

And of his song, not only the senténcé
As writ myn auctour calléd Lollius,
But pleynly, save our tongés difference,
I dar wel seyn, in al that Troilus
Seyde in his song, lo, every word right thus
As I shal seyn! And, who-so list it here,
Lo, next this vers he may it finden here.

381. *for to*, so S H₅ Ad.; others *to*.

386. *ful muchel*, so H₄ R; *γ yet muchel(l)*;
J and others *muchel*.

393. In Boccaccio Troilus merely gives way to
singing in light-heartedness. Chaucer makes
Troilus compose a song (ll. 400-420) which is a
translation of Petrarch's 88th Sonnet.

393. *a And of this song, not only his sentencé*.

394. *Lollius*, i.e. Boccaccio (see v. 1653). Why
Chaucer always refers to Boccaccio as Lollius, is
still a mystery.

399. *he, j ye*.

'If no love is, O God, what fele I so? 400
And if love is, what thing and which
is he?

If love be good, from whennès com'th
my wo?

If it be wikke, a wonder thinketh me
Whenne every torment and adversité
That com'th of him may to me savory
thinke;

For aythurste I the more that ich it drinke.

'And if that at myn ownè lust I brenne,
From whennès com'th my wailing and my
pleynte?

If harmagree me, wher-to pleyne I thenne?
I n'ot, ne why unwery that I feynte. 410
O quikè deth! O swetè harm so queynte!
How may of thee in me swich quantité,
But-if that I consentè that it be?

'And if that I consente, I wrongfully
Compleyne, y-wis.—Thus possèd to and
fro,

Al sterèles with-in a boot am I
A-midde the see betwixen windès two
That in contrarie stonden everè mo.
Allas! What is this wonder maladye? 419
For hete of cold, for cold of hete, I dye!

And to the God of Love thus seydè he
With pitous vois, 'O Lord, now yourès is
My spirit which that oughtè yourès be!
You thanke I, Lord, that han me brought
to this!

But whether goddesse or wommán, y-wis,
She be, I n'ot, which that ye do me serve;
But as her man I wol ay live and sterve.

'Ye stonden in her yēn mightily,
As in a place unto your vertu dignè,
Wherfórè, Lord, if my servíse or I 430
May liken you, so beth to me benigne;
For myn estat roiál here I resigne
Into her hand, and with ful humblè chere
Bicome her man, as to my lady dère.'

In him ne deynèd sparen blood roiál
The fir of lovè,—wher-fro God me blesse!

406. *ich it drinke*, so J Cx. γ; a RG I *drinke*.

430. *Lord*, S O *lord*; Cl. S₂ *my lord*.

436. *wherfro*, J S Cl. *the wherfro*; H₅ H₁ *ye wherfro*.

Ne him forbar in no degree for al
His vertu or his excellent prowessse,
But held him as his thral lowe in destresse,
And brende him so in sondry wise ay newe,
That sixty time a day he lost his hewe. 441

So mochel day fro day his ownè thought,
For lust, to her gan quiken and encresse,
That everich other charge he sette at
nought;

For-thy ful ofte, his hotè fir to cesse,
To seen her goodly look he gan to presse;
For ther-by to ben esèd wel he wende.
And ay the neer he was, the more he
brende;

For ay the neer, the fir the hotter is: 449
This, trowe I, knoweth al this companye.
But were he fer or ner, I dar seye this,—
By night or day for wisdom or folýe
His hertè, which that is his brestès yē,
Was ay on her, that fairer was to sene
Than everè was Eleyne or Polyxene.

Ek of the day ther passèd nought an houre
That to him-self a thousand time he seyde,
'Good goodly, whom to serven I laboure
As I best can, now woldè God, Criseyde,
Yewolden on me rewe, or that I deyde! 460
My derè herte, allas, myn hele and hewe
And lif is lost, but ye wol on me rewe!

Alle othrè dredès weren from him fledde
Both of th' assege and his savacioun,
N' in his desir none othrè sounès bredde
But arguments to his conclusioun,
That she on him wolde han compassioun,
And he to ben her man, whil he may
dure:
Lo, here his lif, and from the deth his
cure!

442. a β *day fro day* (Boc. di giorno in giorno); γ *day by day*.

457. *That*. We should expect *But*.

458. *whom* (?), all to *whom*; to (after *whom*), so D.

458. *laboure*, G A Cl. and *laboure*.

465. *his*, so a β H₁; G γ *him*.

465. *sounes*, so H₄ R and others; J and others *fourmes*.

466. *his*, D H₁ Cl. *this*.

469. *his*, J and others *is*.

The sharpe shourés felle of armés preve 470
That Ector or his othrē brethren didnen,
Ne made him only ther-for onés meve ;
And yit was he, wher-somen wente or riden,
Founde oon the beste and lengest time
abiden

Ther peril was, and dide ek swich travaile
In armés, that to thenke it was mervaille.

But for non hate he to the Grekēs hadde,
Ne also for the rescous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armés for to madde,
But only, lo, for this conclusioun, 480
To liken her the bet for his renoun :
Fro day to day in armés so he spedde
That alle the Grekēs as the deth him dredde.

And fro this forth tho refte him Love his
sleep,

And made his mete his foo ; and ek his sorwe
Gan multiplýé, that, who-so took keep,
It shewéd in his hewe on eve and morwe.
Therefore a tittle he gan him for to borwe
Of other siknesse, lest men of him wende
That th' hoté fir of love so sore him
brende ; 490

And seyde he hadde a fevere, and ferde amis.
But how it was, certeyn, I can not seye,—
If that his lady understood not this,
Or feynéd her she n'iste,—oon of the
tweye !

But wel rede I, that by no maner weye
Ne seméd it as that she of him roughte,
Or of his peyne, or what-so-eve he
thoughte.

But thenné felté Troilus swich wo
That he was wel nigh wood ; foray his drede
Was this, that she som wight had lovéd so
That nevere of him she wolde han taken
hede. 501

471. *or*, R Cl. and (Boc.)

483. *a* β *alle the* (H₄ *alle*) ; G J γ *the*.

487. *a* β *on eve* ; γ *bothe eve*.

490. S₁ D *so sore him brende* ; Ad. *him for brende* ; rest *him brende*.

496. *a* β *as that* (P H₂ *as*) ; G γ *that*.

498. *thenne* (?), all *than(ne)* ; Ad. *han*. Boc.
Di quinci sentia Troilo tal dolore. All except H₂
H₄ insert *this* before *Troilus*.

For that, him thoughte he felte his herté
blede ;

Ne of his wo ne durste he not biginne
To tellen her, for al this world to winne.

But, whan he hadde a spacé from his care,
Thus to him-self ful ofte he gan to pleyne :
He seyde, 'O fool, now artow in the snare,
That whilom japedest at Lovés peyne !
Now artow hent ! Now gnaw thyn owné
cheyne !

Thou were ay wont ech lovert to reprende 510
Of thing, for which thou canst thee not
defende.

'What wol now every lover seyn of thee,
If this be wist, but evere in thyn absence
Laughen in scorn and seyn, "Lo, ther
go'th he

That is the man of so gret sapience
That held us lovers leest in reverence !
Now, thanked God, he may go in the
daunce

Of hem that Love list feblý t'avaunce !"

'But, O thou woful Troilus, God wolde,
Sith thou most loven thorough thy destiné,
That thou biset were on swich oon that
sholde 521

Knowe al thy wo, al lakkéd her pité !
But al-so cold in love towárdès thee
Thy lady is, as frost in winter moone ;
And thou for-don, as snow in fir is soone.

'God wolde, I were arived in the port
Of deth, to which my sorwé wol me lede !
A, Lord, to me it were a gret confort !
Than were I quit of languissching in
drede !

For, be myn hiddé sorwe y-blowe on
brede, 530

I shal bejapéd ben a thousand time
More than that fool of whosfolý men rime.

502. *a* β *For that* ; J G *For that cause* ; γ
For which.

510. β *to reprehende* (*reprende*) ; rest omit *to*.

515. *so*, J D *the*.

518. *feblely t'avaunce* ; J and others *febly for t'avaunce*.

530. *be* (Boc.) ; *by*, Cx. G S₁ Cl. Cp.

532. *that*, Cx. R *a*

'But now, help, God! and ye, swete
for whom
I pleyne y-caught, ye, neverè wight so
faste,
O mercy, derè herte, and help me from
The deth! For I, whil that my lif may
laste,
More than my lif wol love you to my laste.
And with som frendly look gladdeth me,
swete,
Though neverè no thing more ye me
bihete!'—

Thise wordès, and ful many another mo
He spak, and callèd evere in his com-
pleynte 541
Her namè, for to tellen her his wo,
Til nigh that he in saltè terès dreynete.
Al was for naught: she herdè not his
pleynte;
And whan that he bethoughte on that
folye,
A thousand fold his wo gan multiplýe.

Bi-wailing in his chambrè thus allone,
A frend of his, that callèd was Pandàre,
Com onès in unwar, and herde him grone,
And saw his frend in swich distresse and
care: 550
'Allas!' quod he, 'who causeth al this
fare?

Omercy, God! what unhap may this mene?
H an now thus sonè Grekès maad you lene?

'Or hastow som remors of conscience,
And art now falle in som devocioun,
And wailest for thy sinne and thyn offence,
And hast for ferdè caught attricioun?
God save hem that bi-segèd han our toun,
That so can leye our jolité on presse, 559
And bringe our lusty folk to holinesse!'

533. *ye*, J Cp. *the*.

534. *ye*, J Cp. *the*.

537. *my lif*, P *my lyf* (Boc. Che t' ama più che la sua vita assai); H₂ *my self*; H₁ corrupt; J and others *my-self*.

539. *no thing more*, γ *more thing*.

540. *mo*, so a; others *lo(o)*.

546. *thousand*, H₁ *hundred* (Boc. in cento).

559. *That so*, H₂ Cl. H₁ *And so*.

559. *on presse*, a *in presse*.

These wordès seyde he for the nonès alle,
That with swich thing he mighte him
angry maken,
And with an anger don his sorwè falle
As for the time, and his coràge awaken;
But wel wiste he, as for as tongès spaken,
Ther n'as a man of gretter hardnesse
Than he, ne more desirèd worthinesse.

'What cas,' quod Troilus, 'or what
àventure
Hath guided thee to see my languisshinge
That am refús of every créature? 570
But for the love of God, at my preyinge
Go henne away, for certès my deyninge
Wol thee disease, and I mot nedès deye;
Therfor go wey, there n'is no more to seye!

'But if thou wene I be thus sik for drede,
It is not so; and therfor scorn me nought.
Ther is another thing I take of hede
Wel more than aught that Grekès han
yit wrought,
Which cause is of my deth for sorwe and
thought.
But though that I now telle it theene leste,
Be thou naught wroth: I hide it for the
beste.' 581

This Pandar that nigh malt for wo and
routhe
Ful oft seyde, 'Allas! what may this be?
Now frend,' quod he, 'if everè love or
trouthè

Hath been, or is, betwixen thee and me,
Ne do thou neverè swich a cruelté
To hidè fro thy frend so gret a care!
Wostow not wel that it am I, Pandàre?

'I woldè parten with thee al thy peyne
If it be so I do thee no comfort, 590
As it is frendès right, soth for to seyne,
To entrèparten wo, as gład desport.

563. *his sorwe falle*, R S γ *his wo to falle*.

566. *a man*, J *no man*.

569. *my languisshinge*, J and others *me languisshing*.

576. *scorn me nought*, J and others *scorn(e) nought*.

585. *or is*, J and others *or this*.

589. *wolite*, so D S₂ Dg.; rest *wil*, *wol*, *wole*, *welc*.

I have, and shal, for trewe or fals report,
In wrong and right, y-loved thee al my
live :
Hyd not thy wo fro me, but tel it blive.'

Than gan this sorwful Troilus to sike,
And seyde him thus : ' God leve it be
my beste

To telle it thee, for sith it may thee like
Yit wol I telle it, though myn hertè breste :
And wel wot I, thou mayst do me no reste.
But lest thou deme I trustè not to thee,
Now herknè, frend, for thus it stant with
me.—

602

' Lo, Love, ayeins the whiche who-so de-
fendeth

Himselfen most, him altherlest availeth,
With desespair so sorwfully m' offendeth,
That streight unto the deth myn hertè
saileth :

Ther-to desir so brenningly m' assaileth,
That to be slayn it were a gretter joye 608
To me than king of Grece ben and Troye !

' Suffiseth this, my fullè frend Pandaré,
That I have seyde, for now wostow my wo.
And for the love of God, my coldè care
So hyd it wel ! I tolde it nevere to mo,
For harmès mighten folwen, mo than
two,

If it were wist.— But be thou in gladnesse,
And let me sterve, unknowe, of my des-
tresse !'

' How hast thou thus unkindely and longe
Hid this fro me ? thou fool !' quod
Pandarus.

' Paraunter thou mayst after swich oon
longe,

That myn avys anon may helpen us.' 620
' This were a wonderthing !' quod Troilus.

602. *herkne*, J and others *herke*.

603. *Lo, Love* (P), all *Love*.

605. *sorwfully*, J and others *sorowful*(l).

613. *I tolde*, Cl. *I telle*; H¹⁵ *and telle*; J omits it after *tolde*.

613. H₄ *nevere to no mo*; Cx. *nevere no mo*; rest *nevere to mo*. (Read ? *nevere mo* or *nevere o mo*. See l. 675, where G has *never to mo*.)

619. *mayst*, γ *might*(est).

' Thou coudest nevere in love thy-selven
wisse :
How devel mayst thou than bringè me to
blisse !'

' Ye, Troilus, now herknè,' quod Pandaré,
' Though I be nice ! It happeth often so
That oon that excès doth ful yvelè fare,
Bygood counseil can kepe his frend therfro.
I have myselfen seyn a blind man go,
Ther-as he fel that coude loken wyde :
A fool may eek a wis-man oftè gyde. 630

' A wheston is no kerving instrument,
But yit it maketh sharpè kerving toles ;
And ther thou wost that I have aught
miswent,

Eschewe thou that, for swich thing to
thee scale is :

Thus often wisè men ben war by foles.
If thou so do, thy wit is wel bewared :
By his contrarie is every thing declared.

' For how mighte everè swetnesse han
ben knowe 638

To him that neverè tasted bitternesse ?
Ne no man wot what gladnesse is, I trowe,
That neverè was in sorweorsom destresse :
Eek whyt by blak, byshame ek worthinesse,
Ech set by other more for other semeth :
Asmen maysee, and so the wise it demeth.

' Sith thus of two contraries is o lore,
And that I have in love so ofte assayed
Grevances, m' oughtè comen wel the more
Counseilen thee of that thou art amayed ;
And ek thee n' oughtè not ben yvele apayed
Though I desirè with thee for to bere 650
Thyn hevvy charge : it shal thee lessè dere.

623. *How devel mayst thou than*, so P H₂ Cx.; S₁ *devel than*; R *me than*; J and rest om. *than*; G H₂ *del*(l) for *devel*.

628. *myselfen seyn*, γ insert *ek* before or after *scyn*.

640. *wot what gladnesse is*, so α β; R Cx. H₃ γ *may be inly* (R *veryly*) *glad*.

646. *And that I have* (?), P H₂ *That y have*; rest *I that have*.

647. *Grevances*, etc., P H₂ *me ought*; S₂ Dg. *I ought*; rest *ought*(e). All except H₂ H₄ Cx. insert *and* before *wel*.

649. *And ek thee* (n¹) *oughte not*, so β; α *And ek thou oughtest*; γ *Ek thee ne oughte not*.

'I wot wel that it fareth thus by me,
As to thy brother Paris an herdessa,
Which that y-clepéd was Oenone,
Wrot in a compleynt of her hevynesse :
Ye saw the lettré that she wrot, I gesse ?
'Nay, neveré yit, y-wis,' quod Troilus.
'Now,' quod Pandaré, 'herkneth, it
was thus.— 658

'Phebus, that first fond art of medicine,"
Quod she, "and coude in every wightès care
Remédie and reed by herbès he knew fine,
Yit to himself his conning was ful bare ;
For Love hadde him so bounden in a snare,
Al for the doughter of the King Amete,
That al his craft ne coude his sorwes bete."

'Right so fare I, unhappily for me :
I love oon best, and that me smerteth sore ;
And yet paraunter can I reden thee, 668
And not myself : reprevé me no more !
I have no cause, I wot wel, for to sore
As doth a hawk that listeth for to pleye ;
But to thyn help yit somewhat can I seye.

'And of oo thing right siker maystow be,
That certein, for to dyen in the payne,
That I shal neveré mo discoveren thee ;
Ne, by my trouthe, I kepé not restreyne
Thee fro thy love, though that it were
Eleyne
That is thy brother wyf, if ich it wiste :
Be what she be, and love her as thee liste !

'Therefore, as frend, fulliche in me assure,
And tel me plat now what is th' enchesoun
And final cause of wo that ye endure ; 682
For douteth no thing, myn entencioun
N' is not to you of reprehencioun
To speke as now, for no wight may bireve
A man to love, til that him list to leve.

'And witeth wel, that bothé two ben
vices,—

654. *Oenone*, see Ovid, *Heroid.* v.

658. *Now*, P H₂ Cl. *No*.

661. *he*, y *she*.

681. *And tel me plat now*, P H₂ G y om.
now.

681. G Cl. *thyn enchesoun*.

682. *final*, G J H₃ y *final* (ly).

Mistrusten alle, or ellés allé leve ;
But wel I wot the mene of it no vice is,
For for to tristen som wight is a preve 690
Of trouthe, and for-thy wolde I fayn re-
meve
Thy wronge conceyt, and do thee som
wight triste
Thy wo to telle ; and tel me, if thee liste.

'The wisé seyth, "Wo him that is allone,
For, and he falle, he hath non help to rise";
And sith thou hast a felaw, tel thy mone ;
For this n' is not, certéyn, the nexté wise
To winnen love, as techen us the wise,—
To walwe and wepe as Niobé the quene,
Whos terés yit in marbel ben y-sene. 700

'Lat be thy weping and thy drerinesse,
And lat us lissen wo with other speche,
So may thy woful timé semé lesse.
Delytè not in wo thy wo to seche,
As don thise foolés that hir sorwes eche
With sorwé, whan they have misaventure,
And listè not to seche hem other cure.

'Men seyn, "To wrecche is consolacioun
To have another felaw in his payne."
That oughtè wel ben our opinioun, 710
For, bothé thou and I, of Love we pleyne !
So fut of sorwe am I, soth for to seyne,
That certeynly no moré hardé grace
May sitte on me, for-why ther is no space !

'If God wile, thou art not agast of me,
Lest I wolde of thy lady thee bigile !
Thou wost thy-self whom that I love, pardé,
As I best can, gon sithen longé while.
And sith thou wost I do it for no wile, 719
And seyst I am he that thou trustest most,
Tel me somewhat, sin al my wo thou wost.'

Yit Troilus for al this no word seyde,
But longe he lay as stille as he ded were,
And after this with siking he abreyde,
And to Pandáres vois he lente his ere,

690. *For for to*, so H₄ J G H₁ ; rest *For to*.

719. *wile*, so a y ; J and others *gile*.

720. *seyst*, y *silk(en)*.

725. *Pandares*, so P H₂ G R ; rest *Pandarus*.

725. *lente*, P H₂ G *bente* ; H₄ *laide*.

And up his yēn caste he, that in fere
Was Pandarus, lest that in frenesýe
He sholdé falle, or ellés sooné dye ;

And cri'de 'A-wak' ful wonderliche and
sharpe ;

'What ! slombrestow as in a litargýe? 730
Or artow lyk an assé to an harpe,
That hereth soun, whan men the strengés
plye,

But in his minde of that no melodýe
May sinken, him to gladden, for that he
So dul is of his bestialité?'

And with that Pandar of his wordés stente ;
And Troilus yit him no word answérde,
For-why to tellen was not his entente 738
To nevere no man, for whom that he so ferde.
For it is seyde, men maketh ofte a yerde
With which the maker is himself y-beten
In sundry maner, as thise wisé treten.

And naméliche in his counsél tellenge :
That toucheth love, that oughté ben secré,
For of himself it wol ynough out-springe,
But-if that it the bet govérned be ;
Eek sometime it is craft to semé flee
For thing which in effect men hunté faste.—
Al this gan Troilus in his herté caste. 749

But nathéles whan he had herd him crye
'Awak !' he gan to siké wonder sore,
And seyde, 'Frend, though that I stillé lye,
I am not deed. Now pees, and cry no more,
For I have herd thy wordés and thy lore ;
But suffré me my mischief to biwailen,
For thy provérbés may me naught availen !

'Nor other curé canst thou non for me :
Eek I n'il not be curéd : I wol deye !
What knowe I of the quené Niobe !
Lat be thine olde ensaumple, I thee
preye !' 760

737. MSS. vary—some word for thing.

739. MSS. vary. H₄ R Cx. *Nevere to no man, for whom he so ferde ; a² To no man, for-why that he so ferde (read nevere for no ?).*

747. it is craft, so a Cx. H₃ ; rest it is a craft.

748. For thing, γ Fro thing. (See ii. 194, 868.)

749. in his herte, H₄ H₂ omit his.

753. am, J G nam.

757. Nor, J and others For.

'No !' quod tho Pandarus, 'Therfore I seye,
Swich is delit of folés to biwepe
Hir wo, but seken boté they ne kepe !

'Now knowe I, that ther reson in thee
faileth !

But tel me, if I wisté what she were
For whom that thecal this misaunteraileth,
Dorstestow that I tolde her in her ere
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thyself for fere,
And her besoughte on thee to han som
routhe?'

'Why, nay !' quod he, 'by God and by
my trouthe !' 770

'What ! not as bisily,' quod Pandarus,
'As though myn owné lyf lay on this nede?'
'No, certés, brother !' quod this Troilus.
'And why?—'For that thou sholdest
neveré spede.'—
'Wost thou that wel?—'Ye, that is out
of drede !'

Quod Troilus. 'For al that evere ye conne,
Shen'il to noswiche wreccheas I ben wonne!'

Quod Pandarus, 'Allas ! what may this be,
That thou despeyrd art thus causéles ?
What ! liveth not thy lady, bendisté ! 780
How wostow so that thou art gracéles ?
Swich yvel is not alwey bootéles.
Why, put not impossiblé thus thy cure,
Sith thing to come is ofte in aventure.

'I graunté wel that thou endurest wo
As sharp as doth he, Ticius, in helle,
Whos stomak foulés tiren everé mo
That lighten voltourés, as bookés telle ;
But I may not endure that thou dwelle
In so unskilful an opinioun 790
That of thy wo is no curacioun.

'But onés n'iltow, for thy coward herte
And for thyn ire and folissh wilfulness,

761. tho, all omit except H₄ S γ⁴.

764. ther reson, so H₄ G R J Cp. II₁ ; rest omit ther.

767. Dorstestow, so G R Cl. H₁ ; rest dorst thou.

767. tolde her, so H₄ G H₅ H₃ ; P H₂ R Cx. tolde it ; rest tolde (Cl. telle).

773. No, certés, brother. a W hy, no, pardé, sir.

780. bendisté, so J Cp. H₁ ; others benedicité.

786. Ticius, Tityus. Ovid, Met. iv. 456 ; Boethius iii. met. 12.

For wantrust, tellen of thy sorwes smerte,
Ne to thyn owné help do bisnesse
As muche as speke a reson more or lesse,
But li'st as he that list of no thing recche!
What woman coude lové swich a wrecche?

'What may she demen other of thy deth,
If thou thus dye, and she n'ot why it is,
But that for fere is yolden up thy breth,
For Grekès han bisegegéd us, y-wis? 802
Lord, which a thonk than shaltow han
of this!

Thus wol she seyn, and al the toun at ones,
"The wrecche is ded, the devil have his
bones!"

'Thou mayst allone here wepe and crye
and knele;

But love a woman that she wot it nought,
And she wol quite it that thou shalt not
fele,—

Unknowe, unkist, and lost, that is
unsought.

What! many a man hath love ful dere
y-bought, 810

Ye, twenty winter, that his lady wiste,
That neveré yit his lady mouth he kiste!

'What! sholde he therfor fallen in despair,
Or be recréant for his owné tene,
Or slen himself, al be his lady fair?
Nay, nay! but evere in oon be fressh
and grene

To serve and love his deré hertés quene,
And thanke it is a guerdon, her to serve,
A thousand fold more than he can deserve!'

And of that word took hedé Troilus, 820
And thoughte anon what foly he was inne,
And how that soth him seyde Pandarus,
That for to slen himself mighte he not winne,
But bothé don unmanhod and a sinne,
And of his deth his lady naught to wite;
For of his wo, God wot, she knew ful lite.

794. *For, a And.*

796. *speke a reson, a speke o word (ye).*

803. *than, J* and others omit.

808. *it, γ omits.*

811. *Ye, so S; H₁ Ya; rest omit; P Ad. or
(er) that; Cx. ne wiste; G not wiste.*

820. *And, γ omits.*

And with that thought he gan ful soré sike,
And seyde, 'Allas! what is me best to do?'
To whom Pandareanswerdè, 'Yif theelike,
The beste is that thou tellé me thy wo;
And have my trouthe, but thou finde it so
I be thy bote or that it be ful longe, 832
To peces do me drawe, and sithen hongel!'

'Ye, so seystow!' quod Troilus tho,
'Allas!

But, God wot, it is naught the rather so!
Ful hard were it to helpen in this cas;
For wel finde I that Fortune is my fo,
Ne alle the men that riden conne or go
May of her cruel wheel the harm with-
stonde;

For as her list, she pley'th with free and
bonde.' 840

Quod Pandarus, 'Than blamestow Fortune
For thou art wroth: ye, now at erst I see!
Wostow not wel that Fortune is commune
To every maner wight in som degree?
And yit thou hast this confort, lo, pardé!
That as her joyés moten overgon,
So mote her sorwes passen everychon.

'For if her wheel stinte any thing to torne,
Than cesséd she Fortune anon to be.
Now, sith her wheel by no way may sojorne,
What wostow, if her mutabilité 851
Right as thy-selven list wol don by thee,
Or that she be not fer fro thyn helpinge?
Paraunter thou hast causé for to singe!

'And therfor wostow what I thee
beseche?

Lat be thy wo and torning to the grounde;
For who-so list have heling of his leche,
To him bihoveth first unwrye his wounde.
To Cerberus in helle ay be I bounde,
Al were it for my suster al thy sorwe, 860
By my wil she sholdé be thyn to-morwe!

830. *thy wo, so a² J G H₅ A; γ and others al
thy wo.*

831. *finle it, γ it finde.*

834. *seystow, γ thou seyst.*

857. *heling, G J Cl. helpinge.*

858. *unwrye, J γ unwyre.*

860. *Al (?), all omit first Al; P H₂ corrupt.*

861. *sholdé be thyn, P inserts al before thyn:
Jo. γ inserts al before be.*

'Look up, I seye, and tel me what she is
Anon, that I may gon aboute thy nede.
Knewe ich her aught? For my love, tel
me this!

Than wolde I hopen rather for to spede.
Tho gan the veyne of Troilus to blede,
For he was hit, and wex al red for shame.
'A ha!' quod Pandar, 'here biginneth
game!'

And with that word hegan him for to shake,
And seyde, 'Thef, thou shalt her namé
telle!' 870

But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake
As though men sholde han led him into
helle,

And seyde, 'Allas! of al my wo the welle,
Than is my sweté fo calléd Criseyde!
And wel nigh with the word for fere he
deyde.

And whan that Pandar herde her namé
nevene,

Lord! he was glad, and seyde, 'Frend
so dere,' 877

Nowfare aught! for Jovés name in hevене,
Love hath bi-set thee wel! Be of good chere!
For of good namé, wisdom, and manére
She hath y-nough, and ek of gentillesse.
If she be fair, thou wost thyself, I gesse!

'N' I neveré saw a moré bountevous
Of her estat, n' a gladder, ne of speche
A frendlier, n' a moré gracious
For to do wel, ne lasse had nede to seche
What for to don; and al this bet to eche
In honour to as fer as she may strecche,
A kingés herté sem'th by heres a wrecche.

'And for-thy look of good confórt thou be;
For certainly, the firsté point is this 891

865. *rather*, P H₂ H₃ Cl. H₁ *the rather(e)*.

875. *the word*, H₄ R Cx. H₁ *that word*.

880. *name, wisdom*, R γ insert *and* before *wisdom*.

883. *N' I neveré saw*, so P H₂ Jo. H₁; H⁴ R Cx. D *Ne neveré saw I*; G H₃ Cp. Cl. *Ne neveré saw*.

884. *n' a*, Cl. *ne a*; Cp. *na*; G *non*; rest *ne*.

890-896. All MSS. except P H₂ H₄ (and Jo. in later hand on margin) omit this stanza; Cx. omits it, but Th. has it.

Of noblé corage and wel ordeyné,—
A man to have pes with himself, ywis.
So oughtest thou; for nought but good it is
To loven wel and in a worthy place:
Thee oughté not to clepe it hap, but grace.

'Andalso thenk, and therwithgladdé thee,
That sith thy lady vertuous is al,
So folweth it that ther is som pité
Amongés alle thise othre in general: 900
And for-thy see that thou in special
Requeré naught that is ayein her name,
For vertu streccheth not himself to shame.

'But wel is me that everé I was born,
That thou biset art in so good a place;
For by my trouthe, in love I dorste han
sworn

Thee sholdé nevere hantid thus fair a grace.
And wostow why? For thou were wont
to chace

At Love in scorn, and for despit him calle
"Seint Idiot, lord of thise foolés alle." 910

'How often hastow maad thy nicé japes,
And seyde, that "Lovés servants every-
chone

Of nicité ben verray Goddés apés;
And somé woldé monche hir mete allone
Ligginga-bedde and make hem for to grone;
And som," thou seydest, "had a blanché
fevere,

And preydest God he sholdé neveré kevere.

"And some of hem toke on hem for
the cold

More than y-nough," so seydestow ful ofte;
"And some han feynéd ofté time and
told 920

How that they waken whan they slepen
softe;

892. *and wel ordeyné*, so P H₂; J Th. *and wel ordeyne the*; H₄ *thow ordeyne the*.

893. *A man*, J H₄ omit.

896. *Thee*, J H₄ *Men*.

904. *that everé I was born*, R *that everé was I*; G S Ad. Cp. H₁ *that everé that I was born*.

907. *neveré han tid*, G H₅ J *neveré in love han tid*.

907. *thus fair*, a R Cx. D Cl. *so fair*.

914. *monche*, so *a*; rest *muche*, *mucche*, *mucliche*, *meche*.

And thus they wolde han brought hemself
a-lofte,
But nathêles were under at the laste ! ”
Thus seydestow, and japêdest ful faste.

‘ Yit seydestow that “ for the morê part,
These lovers woldê speke in general,
And thoughten that it was a siker art
For failing for t’ assayen over-al ! ”
Now may I jape of thee, if that I shal !
But nathêles, though that I sholdê deye, 930
That thou art non of tho, I dorstê seye.

‘ Now beet thy brest, and sey to God of
Love,

“ Thy gracê, Lord ! for now I me repente
If I mis-spak, for now myself I love.”
Thus sey with al thyn herte in good en-
tente ! ’

Quod Troilus, ‘ A, Lord ! I me consente,
And preye to thee my japêd thou forgive,
And I shal neverê morê whil I live.’

‘ Thou seyst wel,’ quod Pandâre, ‘ and
now I hope

That thou the Goddês wraththe hast al
apedes ; 940

And sithen thou hast wopen many a drope,
And seyð such thing wherwith thy god
is plesed,

Now woldê neverê God but thou were esed !
And thenk wel, she of whom rist al thy wo,
Her-after may thy confort ben also.

‘ For th’ilkê grounde that ber’th the wedêcs
wikke

Ber’th eek these holsom herbês as ful ofte ;
And next the foulê netlê, rough and thikke,
The rosê waxeth swetê, smothe, and softe ;
And next the valey is the hil o-lofte ; 950
And next the derkê night, the gladdê
morwe ;

And also joye is next the fyn of sorwe.

‘ Now lookê that a-temprê be thy bridel,
And for the beste ay suffrê to the tide,
Or ellês al our labour is on ydel :
He hasteth wel that wisly can abide.
Be diligent, and trewe, and ay wel hide :
Be lusty, frece, persêvere in thy servise,
And al is wel, if thou werke in this wise.

‘ But he that parted is in every place 960
Is nowher hool, as writen clerkês wise.
What wonder is, though swich oon have
no grace ?

Eek wostow how ? It far’th of som servise,
As plante a tree, or herbe, in sondry wise,
And on the morwê pulle it up as blive !
No wonder is, though it may neverê thrive.

‘ And sith that God of Love hath thee
bestowed

In placê digne un-to thy worthinesse,
Stond fastê, for to good port hastow
rowed !

And of thy-self for any hevinesse 970
Hope alwey wel ; for, but-if drerinesse
Or over-haste our bothê labour shende,
I hope of this to maken a good ende.

‘ And wostow why ? I am the lesse a-fered
Of this matêrê with my necê trete,
For this have I herd seyð of oldê lered :
Was neverê man nor woman yit begete
That was unapt to suffrê lovês hete—
Celestial, or ellês love of kinde.
For-thysom grace I hope in her to finde. 980

‘ And for to speke of her in special,
Her beautê to bithenken and her youthe,
It sit her naught to be celestial
As yit, though that her listê bothe and
coute :

But trewely it sate her wel right nouthe
A worthy knight to loven and cherice ;
And, but she do, I holde it for a vice !

924. *japedest*, P H₂ Cx. Ad. *ympedist* (impeded).

926. *lovers*, P H₂ *faitours*.

938. *whil I live*, a³ *whil that I live*.

939. *Pandâre*, so a R Cx. 1) ; rest *Pandarus*.

947. *as ful ofte*, P H₂ and (for as) ; Cx. omit *as*.

948. *And next*, so S ; rest omit *And*.

949. *The rose waxeth swete, a The lile waxith whit(e)* ; J D γ insert *and before smothe*.

953. *Now looke that*, H₂ *Look that thou* ; Ph. *Look thou that* ; G *wel* (for *be*).

960. *parted*, γ *departid*.

962, 966. *What wonder is*, No wonder is, G *ist* (for *is*).

972. *bothe*, H₂ *botheres* ; D *bother* ; G Ad. *bothis*.

976. *of olde lered*, so a³ R ; Cx. *oft of lered* ;

H₂ and *lered* ; G *of leryd* ; rest *of wise lered* ;

984. *though that*, J γ *if that* ; K *as that* ; G *that*.

'Wherefore I am, and wol be, ay redy
To peyné me to do you this servise;
For bothé you to plesé, this hope I, 990
Herafterward; for ye be bothé wise,
And conne it counseil kepe in swich a wise
That no man shal the wiser of it be;
And so we may be gladed allé three.

'And, by my trouthe, I have right now
of thee

A good conceit in my wit, as I gesse!
And what it is, I wil now that thou see.—
I thinké, sith that Love of his goodnéssé
Hath thee converted out of wikkednesse,
That thou shalt be the besté post, I leve, 1000
Of al his lay, and most his foos ay greve.

'Ensamlé why, see now these greté
clerkes,.

That erren aldermost ayein a lawe,
And ben converted from hir wikked werkes
Thorough grace of God that list hem to
him drawe,—

Than am they folk that han most God in
awe,

And strengest feithéd ben, I understonde,
And conne an errour alderbest with-
stonde.'

Whan Troilus had herd Pandaré, assented
To ben his helpe in loving of Criseyde, 1010
Wex off his wo, as who seith, untor-
mented;

But hotter wex his love; and than hese yde
With sobré chere, although his herté
pleyde:—

'Now blisful Venus help, or that I sterve,
Of thee, Pandaré, I may som thank
deserve!

'But, deré frend, how shal my wo be lesse
Til this be don? And good, ek tel me this,

988. *Wherefore*, P H₂ G H₃ Cx. *Therefore*.

988. *be ay redy*, G H₃ Cx. *be at redy*; P *alwey*
be redy; H₂ *al day be redy*.

990. *this*, so P H₂ G J R H₃ D; *rest thus*.

992. *conne it*, J *konne a*.

995. *And*, J *Now*; Cl. *For*.

1001. *foos ay greve*, so R J S; a³ G H₃ Cx. D
foes (fois, foos) greve; γ (except D) *foos to greve*.

1003. *erren*, P H₂ G Cx. *are (arm)*.

1017. *And good, ek tel*, P H₂ *And eek now tel*.

How wiltow seyn of me and my destresse?
Lest she be wroth, this drede I most y-wis,
Or n'il not here or trowén how it is. 1020
Al this drede I; and ek for the manére
Of thee, her eem, she n'il no swich thing
here.'

Quod Pandarus, 'Thou hast a ful gret care
Lest that the cherl may falle out of the
mone!

Why, Lord! I hate of thee thy nicé fare!
Why, entrémète of that thou hast to done!
For Goddés love, I biddé thee a bone:
So lat m' alone, and it shal be thy beste!—
'Why, frend,' quod he, 'now do right
as thee leste! 1029

'But herké, Pandar, oo word; for I n'olde
That thou in me wendest so gret folýe,
That to my lady I desiren sholde
That toucheth harm or any vilanye;
For dredéles me weré leveré dýe
Than she of me aught ellés understoode
But that that mighté sounen in-to goode.'

The lough this Pandar, and anon
answérde,

'And I thy borw, fy! no wight doth but so!
I roughté naught though that she stood
and herde 1039

I how that thou seyst! But far-wel, I wol go.
A-dieu! be glad! God spede us bothé two!
Yif me this labour and this bisnesse,
And of my speed be thynal the swetnesse!'

The Troilus gan doun on knees to falle,
And Pandar in his armés henté faste,
And seyde, 'Now, fy on the Grekés alle!
Yit, pardé, God shal helpe us at the laste!
And dredéles, if that my lif may laste,
And God to-forn, lo, some of hem shal
smerte; 1049

And yit n' athinketh, this avaunt m'
asterte!

'Now, Pandarus, I can no moré seye
But, thou wis, thou wost, thou mayst,
thou art al!

1038. *fy!* G om.; J o. *for*; R *whi*.

1043. *al the*, J *γ al that*.

1050. *this avaunt*, H₃ *γ that this avaunt*.

1051. *Now, Pandarus*, P H₂ *γ Now, Pandare*.

My lif, my deth, hool in thyn hond I leye!
Help now!—Quod he, 'Yis, by my
trouthe I shal!—

'God yelde thee, frend! And this in
special,'

Quod Troilus, 'that thou me recomaunde
Til her that may me to the deth comaunde!'

This Pandarus, tho désirous to serve
His fullé frend, tho seyde in this manére;
'Far-wel, and thank I wil thy thank
deserve! 1060

Have here my trouthe, and that thou
shalt wel here!'

And wente his wey, thinking on this
matére,

And how he best mighte her beseche of
grace,

And finde a timé ther-to and a space.

For every wight that hath an hous to founde
Ne renneth not the werk for to beginne
With rakel hond; but he wol bide a
stounde,

And sende his hertés line out fro withinne
How alderfirst his purpos for to winne.

1058. *tho*, H₄ *ful*.

1059. *tho*, *ys than*.

1064. *space*, J *place*.

1069. *How* (?), all omit (but necessary to the
sense as well as metre?).

Al this tho Pandar in his herté thoughte,
And caste his werk ful wisly or he wroughte.

But Troilus lay tho no lenger down, 1072
But up anon up-on his stedé bay,
And in the feld he pleydè the lioun.
Wo was that Greek that with him mette
a-day!

And in the toun his maner tho forth ay
So goodly was, and gat him so in grace
That ech him lovede that lokèd on his face.

For he bicom the frendlieste wight, 1079
The gentilleste and ek the mostè free,
The thriftieste and oon the bestè knight,
That in his timé was or mightè be.
Dede were his japès and his cruelté,
His hyè port and his manére estraunge;
And ech of tho gan for a vertu chaunge.

Now let us stinte of Troilus a stounde,
That fareth lik a man that hurt is sore
And is somdel of aking of his wounde
Y-lissèd wel, but helèd no del more.

And, as an esy pacient, the lore 1090
Abit of him that go'th about his cure;
And thus he drieth forth his aventure.

1070. *Al this tho*, so H₄; rest omit *tho*.

1075. *a-day*, so J and others; rest *that day*.

1078. *on*, a H₃ Cx. *in*.

1092. *drieth*, P H₂ H₅ Cx. A S *driveth*.

BOOK II

OUT of this blakè wawès for to saile,
O wind, O wind, the weder ginneth clere:
For in this see the boot hath swich
travaille,

Of my conning that unnethe I it stere.
This see clepe I the tempestous matére
Of desespeyr that Troilus was inne;
But now of hope the kalendès biginne.

O lady myn, that callèd art Cleó,
Thou be my speed fro this forth, and my
muse,
To rimè wel this book til I have do! 10

1. R omits ll. 1-49.

4. *conning*, J and others *com(m)ing*.

Me nedeth here non other art to use;
For-why to every lover I m' excuse,
That of no sentèment I this endite,
But out of Latin in my tonge it write.

Wherefore I n'il have neither thank ne
blame

Of al this werk, but preye you mekèly
Disblameth me if any word be lame;
For as myn auctour seyde, so seye I.
Ek though I speke of love unfeelingly,
No wonder is; for it no thing of-newe
is, 20

A blind man can-not juggen wel in hewes.

21. *man*, J H₅ *wight*; H³ *knight*.

Ye knowe ek, that in forme of speche is
chaunge

Withinne a thousand yeer, and wordès tho
That hadden pris, now wonder nice and
straunge

Us thinketh hem; and yit they spake
hem so,

And spedde as wel in love as men now do:
Ek for to winnen love in sondry ages,
In sondry londès sondry ben uságes.

And for-thy if it happe in any wise,
That here be any lover in this place 30
That herkneth, as the story can devise
How Troilus com til his lady grace,
And thenketh, 'so n'olde I not love
purcháce,'

Or wondreth on his speche or his doíng,
I n'ot; but it is me no wonderíng.

For every wight which that to Romé went
Halt not oo path, ne alwey oo manére;
Ek in som lond were al the gamé shent,
If that men ferde in love as men don
here,

As thus,—in open doing or in chere, 40
In visitíng, in forme, or seyde hir sawes:
For-thy men seyn, ech contré hath his
lawes.

Ek scarsly ben ther in this placé three
That han in love seyde lik, and don in al,
For to thy purpos this may líkè thee,
And thee right nought, yit al is seyde or
shal;

Ek some men grave in tree, some in ston
wal,

As it bitit.— But, sin I have begonne,
Myn auctour shal I folwen, if I conne. 49

—In May that moder is of monthés glade.
That fresshé flourés, blewé, white, and
rede,

22. *Ye*, J H₆ H₃ S Cx. *I*.

22. *that*, a² *this*.

29. a² insert stanza 7 before stanza 5.

35. *wonderíng*, so H₃ Cl.; a² *wondur thyng*;
J and others *wondríng*.

37. *ne*, so a β; J H₃ nor; γ or.

39. *men*, so a β; Cx. γ *they*.

42. *seyn*, H₄ Cl. *seyth*.

47. *some men*, a² omit *men*.

51. *white*, J γ and *white*.

Ben quike a-gayn, that winter dedé made,
And ful of bawme is fletíng every mede:
Whan Phebus doth' his brighté bemés
sprede

Right in the whité Bole, it so betidde
As I shal singe, on Mayés day the
thridde,

That Pandarus, for al his wisé speche,
Felte ek his part of lovés shotés kene,
That, coude he nevere so wel of loving
preche,

It made his hewe a-day ful ofté grenc. 60
So shoop it, that him fil that day a tene
In love, for which in wo to bedde he
wente,

And made, or it was day, ful many a
wente.

The swalwé Proigné, with a sorwful lay,
Whan morwé com, gan make her way-
mentíng

Why she forshapen was; and everé lay
Pandare a-bedde, half in a slomberíng,
Til she so nigh him made her cheteríng
How Tereús gan forth his suster take, 69
That with the noise of her he gan awake,

And gan to calle and dresse him up to rise,
Remembríng him his erand was to doone
From Troilus, and ek his grete emprise;
And caste, and knew in good plit was
the moone

To don viage, and took his wey ful soone
Unto his neces paleys ther biside.—
Now Janus, God of Entré, thou him gíde!

Whan he was come unto his neces place,
'Wher is my lady?' to her folk quod
he;

And they him tolde, and he forth in gan
pace, 80

And fond two othré ladies sete and she
Withinne a pavéd parlour; and they three

62. *in wo*, J for *wo*; a² *ful wo*.

64. *Proigné*. See *L.G.W.* vii.

69. *Tereus*, so H₄ R Cx.; a² *Thereus*; J
Tereux; γ *Tireux*.

71. *dresse*, J *dressed*; a² *dressyn*.

71. *up*, J γ; a β omit.

78. *neces*, J R Cx. H₃ *nece*.

Herden a mayden reden hem the geste
Of al the sege of Thebès, whil hem leste.

Quod Pandarus, 'Madámè, God you see,
With al your book and al the com-
panye!'—

'Ey, unclè, now welcòme y-wis!' quod she;
And up she ros, and by the hond in hye
She took him faste, and seydè, 'This
night thrye—' 89

To goodè mote it torne!—of you I mette.
And with that word she doun on bench
him sette.

'Ye, necè, ye shal farè wel the bet,
If God wile, al this yer!' quod Pandarus;
'But I am sory that I have you let
To herken of your book ye preisen thus.
For Goddès love, what seith it? Tel it us!
Is it of love? O, som good ye me lere!'
'Uncle!' quod she, 'your maistresse is
not here!'

With that they gonnen laughe; and tho
she seyde, 99

'This rōmaunce is of Thebès, that werede;
And we han herd how that King Laius
deyde

Thorough Édippushissone, and al that dede;
And here we stinten at thise lettres rede,
How that the bisshop, as the book can telle,
Amphiorax, fil thorough the grounde to
helle.'

Quod Pandarus, 'Al this knowe I my-selfe,
And al th' assege of Thebès, and the care;
For herof ben ther makéd bookés twelve.
But lat be this, and tel me how ye fare. 109
Do wey your barbe, and shewe your facè
bare.

Do wey your book: ris up, and lat us
daunce,

And lat us don to May som óbservaunce!'

83. *the geste*, a³ *al the grste*.

84. *Of al the sege* (?). All omit *al*.

86. *your book*, γ *your fayre book*.

87. *now*, γ *myne*.

104. *How that*, so S Ad.; rest omit *that*.

105. *Amphiorax*, Amphiarus. See v. 1500;

A. and A. 57; C. T. D 741.

110. *barbe*, J G H₅ H₃ R Cx. *wimpel*.

'Ey, God forbedè!' quod she, 'Be ye
mad?

Is that a widwes lif, so God you save?
By God, ye maken me right sore adrad!
Ye ben so wilde, it semeth as ye rave!
It satè me wel bet, ay in a cave
To bidde and rede on holy seintès lives!
Lat maydens gon to daunce, and yongè
wives!'

'As everè thrive I,' quod this Pandarus,
'Yit coude I telle a thing to do you
pleye!'— 121

'Now, uncle derè,' quod she, 'telle it us
For Goddès love! Is than the sege awaye?
I am of Grekès fer'd so that I deye!'

'Nay, nay!' quod he, 'As everè mote I
thrive,
It is a thing wel bet than swichè five!'

'Ye, holy God!' quod she, 'What thing
is that?

What! bet than swichè five? Ey, nay,
y-wis!

For al this world ne can I redè what
It sholdè ben! Som jape I trowe is this!
And, but your-selven telle us what it is, 131
My wit is for t'arede it al too lene;
As help me God, I n'ot not what ye
mene!'

'And I your borw, ne neverè shal for me
This thing be told to you, so mote I thrive!'
'And why so, uncle myn? Why so?'
quod she.—

'By God,' quod he, 'that wol I telle as
blive!

For prouder womman is ther non on-live,
And ye it wiste, in al the town of Troye:
I japè naught, so everè have I joye!' 140

115. *By God*, etc., a⁵ (i.e. P H₂ G H₅ H₄) *Ye maken me by loves sore adrad*.

116. a⁵, R H₃ Cl. *that*.

117. *in a*, J and others *in*.

119. *maydens gon to*, a⁵ *maydenes go daunce*.

123. *the sege*, γ *th' assege*.

124. *fer'd so*, so R Cx.; J *fered so*; γ *so fer(e)d*; others var.

133. *n'ot not*, so H₃ γ; a β om. *not*. G R insert *as before I*.

134. *for me*, so a⁵ γ⁶; J R Cx. H₃ S₂ Dg. *quod he*.

140. *so*, H₄ γ *as*.

Tho gan she wondren moré than biforn
A thousand fold, and down her yen caste ;
For neveré sith the time that she was born
To knowé thing desiréd she so faste.
And with a sik she seyde him at the laste,
'Now, unclé min, I n'il you not displese,
Nor axen more that may do you disese.'

So aftér this with many wordés glade,
And frendly talés, and with mery chere,
Of this and that they play'de, and gonnen
wade 150

In many an uncouth glad and deep matere,
As frendés don, whan they be met i-fere ;
Til she gan axen him how Ector ferde,
That was the townés wal and Grekés
yerde.

'Fulwel, I thanke it God,' quod Pandarus,
'Save in his arm he hath a litel wounde ;
And ek his fresshé brother Troilus,
The wisé worthy Ector the secounde,
In whom that allé vertu list abounde,
As allé trouthe and allé gentillesse, 160
Wisdom, honóur, fredom, and worthi-
nesse.'

'In good feith, em,' quod she, 'that
liketh me !
They faren wel, God save hem bothé two !
For trewélliche I holde it gret deynté,
A Kingés sone in armés wel to do,
And ben of good condiciouns therto ;
For gret powér and moral vertu here
Is selde y-seyn in o persóne i-fere.'

'In good feith, that is soth,' quod
Pandarus ;
'But, by my trouthe the king hath sonés
tweye, 170

That is to mene, Ector and Troilus,
That certeinly, though that I sholdé deye,
They ben as voide of vices, dar I seye,

141. *more*, H₄ G *wel more*.

143. *time*, H₄ G *tid*.

143. *that*, R Cx. omit.

144. *thing*, a² Cx. *a thing*.

147. *Nor*, a² To ; R Cx. *Ne*.

166. *of good condiciouns* ; read (Y) *good of con-*
dicouns.

170. *trouthe*, a² *heed*.

As any men that live under the sonne :
Ilir might is wide y-knowe, and what they
conne.

'Of Ector nedeth no thing for to telle :
In al this world ther n'is a bettré knight
Than he, that is of worthinessé welle ;
And he wel moré vertu hath than might.
This knoweth many a wisand worthy wight.
The samé pris of Troilus I seye : 181
God help me so, I knowe not swiché
tweye !'—

'By God,' quod she, 'of Ector that issoth ;
Of Troilus the samé thing trowe I,
For dredécles men telleth that he doth
In armés day by day so worthily,
And ber'th him here at hom so gentilly
To every wight, that allé pris hath he
Of hem that me were levest preiséd be.'

'Ye seye right soth, y-wis !' quod
Pandarus, 190

'For yesterday who-so had with him been,
Mighté han wondred upon Troilus ;
For neveré yit so thikke a swarm of been
Ne fleigh, as Grekés for him gonné fleen ;
And thorough the feld in every wightés ere
Ther n'as no cry but "Troilus is there !"

'Now here, now there he hunted hem so
faste,
Ther n'as but Grekés blood and Troilus :
Now him he hurte, and him al doun he
caste : 199

Ay wher he wente, it was arrayéd thus :
He was hir deth, and sheld and lif for us ;
That, as that day, ther dorsté non with-
stonde,
Whil that heheld his blodyswerd in honde.

174. *live*, so J and others ; a² Cl. *liveth* ; others
liven ; H₄ *lyven under sonne*.

176. *nedeth no thing*, so a² J Cx. H₃ ; H₄ G
nedith (it) no(ugh)t ; Y *nedeth it no more*.

182. *God help me so*, J *so helpe me god* ; G
so god helpe me.

185. *telleth*, so J etc. ; others *telle*, *tellen*.

188. *alle*, J etc. *al* ; Ph. G *al the* ; Cx.
overal.

192. *Mighte*, Y *He mighte*.

194. *for him*, J Cp. and others ; rest *for him*
(see i. 748).

199. *him* . . . *him*, H₃ H₃ Y³ *hem* . . . *hem*.

'Therto he is the frendlieste man
Of gret estat, that evere I saw my live,
And, wher him list, best felawshipé can
To swich as him think'th ablé for to
thrive.'—

And with that word tho Pandarus, as blive,
He took his leve and seyde, 'I wol go
henne.'—

'Nay, blame have I, myn uncle,' quod
she thenne. 210

'What aileth you to be thus wery sone,
And naméliche of wommen? Wol ye so!
Nay, sitteth down! By God, I have to done
With you, to speke of wisdom, or ye go!'—
And every wight that was about them tho,
That herdé that, gan fer away to stonde,
Whil they two hadde al that hem liste on
honde.

Whan that her tale al brought was to an ende
Of her estat and of her governaunce, 219
Quod Pandarus, 'Now is it time I wende!
But yit, I seye, arise and lat us daunce,
And cast your widwes habit to mischaunce!
What list you thus your-self to disfigure,
Sith you is tid so glad an aventure?'—

'A! wel bithought! For love of God,'
quod she,
'Shal I not witen what ye mene of this?'—
'No, this thing axeth leiser,' tho quod he,
'And ek me woldé muché greve, y-wis,
If I it tolde and ye it toke amis.
Yit were it bet my tongé for to stille 230
Than seye a soth that were ayeins your wille.

'For, necé, by the Goddessé Minerve,
And Jupiter that mak'th the thonder ringe,
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,
Ye ben the woman in this world livinge,
Withouten paramours, to my witinge,

209. *I wol*, G Cx. H₃ D *he wolde*.

215. *tho*, so A J etc.; others *to*, *too*, *two*.

217. *al that hem liste*, J *al this matere*.

217. *on honde*, γ *in honde*.

220. *is it time*, so H₂ G H₃; S₁ *time is that*;
J γ *is time*. J D *to* (for *to*).

221. *I seye, arise*, J *ariseth*, I *seye*. J γ^b omit
and.

224. *so glad*, so α β; γ *thus faire*.

226. *not*, α^b *now*.

That I best love and lothest am to greve;
And that ye witen wel your-self, I leve.'

'Y-wis, myn uncle,' quod she, 'graunt
mercy!

Your frendship have I founden everé yit;
I am to no man holden trewely 247
So muche as you, and have so litel quit;
And with the grace of God, emforth my wit,
As in my gilt I shal you nevere offende;
And if I have or this, I wol amende!

'But, for the love of God, I you biseche,
As ye ben he that I most love and triste,
Lat be to me your fremde maner speche,
And sey to me your necé what you liste.'—
And with that word her uncle anon her kiste,
And seyde, 'Gladly, levé necé dere! 251
Tak it for gode that I shal seye you
here!'—

With that she gan her yen down to caste;
And Pandarus to coughé gan a lite,
And seyde, 'Necé, alwey, lo! to the laste,
How-so it be that some men hem delite
With subtil art hir talés for t' endite,
Yit for al that, in hir entencioun,
Hir tale is al for som conclusioun.

'And sithen th'ende is every talés strengthe,
And this matere is so bihovely, 261
What sholde I peynte or drawen it on
lengthe

To you that ben my frend so feithfully?'—
And with that word he gan right inwardly
Biholden her and loken on her face,
And seyde, 'On swich a mirour goodé
grace!'—

Than thoughte he thus: 'If I my tale endite
Aught harde, or make a proces any while,
She shal no savour han therin but lite,
And trowe I wolde her in my wil bigile;
For tendré wittés wenen al be wile 271

239. *myn*, H₃ γ omit.

248. *fremde*, so A D only; J *friende*; others
var. *frende*, *frendly*, etc.

252. *for gode*, so G H₂ etc.; J etc. *for good*.

253. *yen down to*, J R H₃ *look down for to*.

257. *for t' endite*, α etc. *to endite*.

Wher-as they can not pleylich under-
stonde :
For-thy her wit to serven wol I fonde.'—

And lokéd on her in a bisy wise ;
And she was war that he biheld her so,
And seyde, 'Lord ! so fasté ye m' avise !
Say ye me nevere or now ? What sey ye ?
No ?'—

'Yis, yis !' quod he, 'and bet wol, or I go !
But, by my trouthe, I thoughté now if ye
Be fortunat, for now men shal it see. 280

'For t' every wight som goodly aventure
Som time is shape, if he it can receivein ;
And if that he wol take of it no cure
Whan that it com' th, but wilfulliche it
weiven,
Lo, neither cas ne fortune him deceiven,
But right his owné slouthe and wrecched-
nesse :

And swich a wight is for to blame, I gesse !

'Good aventure, O belé nece, have ye
Ful lightly founden, and ye conne it take !
And, for the love of God and ek of me,
Cache it anon, lest aventure slake ! 291
What sholde I lenger proces of it make ?
Yif me your hond ; for in this world is non,
If that you list, a wight so wel bi-gon.

'And sith I speke of good intencioun,
As I to you have told wel her-bifrom,
And love as wel your honour and renoun
As créature in al this world y-born,
By alle the oothés that I have you sworn,
And ye be wroth therfore, or wene I lye,
Ne shal I neveré see you eft with ye ! 301

'Beth not agast, ne quaketh not ! Wher-
to ?
Ne chaungeth naught for feré so your hewe !
For hardily the werste of this is do ;
And though my tale as now be to you newe,
Yit trist alwey ye shal me findé trewe ;
And were it thing that me thoughte
únsittíng,
To you wolde I no swiché talés bringe.'—

286. *owne*, *y verray*.

292. *of it*, a² H₄ Cx. H₃ *to you* ; R om.

'Now, my goode em, for Goddés love I
preye,' 309

Quod she, 'Com off, and tel me what it is !
For bothe I am agast what ye wol seye,
And ek me longeth it to wite, y-wis ;
For whether it be wel or be amis,
Seyon ! Lat men not in this ferédwelle !'—
'Sowil I don : nowherkneht ! Ishal telle !

'Now, necé myn, the kingés deré sone,
The goodé, wise, worthy, fresshe, and free,
Which alwey for to do wel is his wone,
The noble Troilus, so loveth thee, 319
That, but ye helpe, it wil his hané be.
Lo, here is al ! What sholde I moré seye ?
Do what you list, to make him live or deye !

'But if ye lete him deyen, I wil sterve :
Have heremytrouthé, nece, I n'il not lyen,
Al sholde I with this knif my throté
kerven !'—

With that the terés braste out of his yen,
And seyde,— 'If that ye don us bothé dyen
Thus giltéles, than have ye fisshéd faire !
What mendé ye, though that we bothe a-
paire ? 329

'Allas ! he which that is my lord so dere,
That trewé man, that noble gentil knight,
That naught desireth but your frendly
chere,

I see him deyen, ther he go' th up right
And hasteth him with al his fullé might
For to be slayn, if his fortune assente.
Allas, that God you swich a beauté sente !

'If it be so that ye so cruel be 337
That of his deth you listé not to recche,
(That is so trewe and worthy as we see),
No more than of a japer or a wrecche,—
If ye beswich, your beauté may not strecche
To make amendes of so cruél a dede !
Avisément is good bifore the nede !

309. *my*, *y⁸* omits.

329. *though*, J H₁ *if*.

331. *gentil*, a⁵ *worthy* ; Cx. omits.

335. *his fortune*, G H₃ Cl. *fortune wolde* ;
H₅ *his fortune wolde*.

338. *you*, J and others *ye*.

339. *we*, so a *β* ; G *y ye*.

342. *a*, R H₃ omit.

'Wo worth the fairè gemmé vertules !
 Wo worth that herbealso that doth no bote !
 Wo worth that beauté that is routhéles !
 Wo worth that wight that tret ech under-
 fote !

And ye that ben of beauté crop and rote,
 If therewithal in you ther be no routhé, 349
 Than is it harm ye liven by my trouthe !

'And also think wel that it is no gaude ;
 For me were leverè thou and I and he
 Were hangèd, than I sholdè be his baude,
 As hye, as men mighte on us allè see !
 I am thyn em : the shamè were to me
 As wel as thee, if that I sholdè assente
 Thorough myn abet, that he thyn honour
 shente.

'Now understand, for I you naught requere
 To bindè you to him thorough no bilieste,
 But only that ye make him bettrè chere
 Than ye han don or this, and morè feste,
 So that his lif be savèd at the leste : 362
 This'al and som, and pleyntly our entente :
 God help me so, I neverè other mente.

'Lo, this requeste is not but skile y-wis ;
 Ne doute of reson, pardé, is ther non.
 I sette the werstè : that ye dredé this,
 Men woldè wondren sen him come and gon ;
 And ther-ayeins answeyé I thus anon, 369
 That every wight, but he be fool of kinde,
 Wol deme it love of frendship in his minde.

'What ! Who wil demen, though he see a
 man
 To temple go, that he th' imágés eteth ?
 Think ek how wel and wisly that he can
 Góvèrne him-self, that he no thing
 forgeteth,
 That wher he com'th he pris and thank
 him geteth ;
 And ek therto, he shal come here so selde,
 What fors were it, though al the town
 behelde ?

349. *If, J Cl. And.*

349. *ther, J G ne; a Cx. Cp. omit.*

351. *that it is, so J H₂ G H₅ S. H₁ that is ;*

rest (that) this is.

369. *And, R only ; rest omit.*

'Swich love of frendès regn'th in al this
 toun ;

And wrye you in that mantel everè mo !
 And, God so wis be my savacioun, 381
 As I have seyde, your best is to do so.
 But, goodè nece, alwey to stinte his wo,
 So lat your daunger sucred ben a lite,
 That of his deth ye be not for to wite.'—

Criseyde, which that herde him in this wise,
 Thoughte, 'I shal felen what he mene,
 y-wis !'—

'Now, em,' quod she, 'what woldè ye
 devise ?

What is your reed I sholdè don of this ?'—

'That is wel seyde !' quod he, 'Certein
 best is, 390

That ye him love ayein for his lovinge,
 As love for love is skilful guerdoninge.

'Think ek how eldè wasteth every houre
 In ech of you a party of beauté ;
 And therfor, or that agè thee devoure,
 Go love, for, old, ther wil no wight of thee !
 I at this proverbe a lore unto you be :
 Too late y-war ! quod Beauté, whan it
 paste :

And Eldè daunteth Daunger at the laste !

'The kingès fool is wont to cryen loude,
 Whan that him think'th a womman ber'th
 her hyc, 401

"So longè mote ye live, and allè proude,
 Til crowès feet be growe under your ye,
 And sende you thanne a mirour in to pryde,
 In which that ye may see your face a-
 morwe !"

I biddè wisshè you no morè sorwe !'—

With this hestinte, and caste adoun the hed ;
 And she began to breste a-wepe anon,

379. *in, so P H₂ R Cx. S₁ ; G thour ; J etc.*

omit. (See C.T. B 776.)

380. *wrye, a² covere ; y wrye.*

383. *goodè nece, alwey, y⁸ alwey, good(e) nece.*

384. *So, a⁵ omit.*

385. *not for to, a² nothing to ; Cx. H₁ Cl.*

no(ugh) to.

387. *he, H₄ G H₃ Cx. ye*

403. *be growe, so J R γ ; a β be waxe.*

406. *I, γ⁸ Nece, I.*

And seyde, 'Allas, for wo ! Why n'ere
I ded ? ⁴⁰⁹

For of this world the feith is al a-gon !
Allas ! What sholden straungè to me don,
Whan he that for my bestè frend I wende,
Ret me to love, and sholde it medefende ?

'Allas ! I wolde han trusted, doutèles,
That if that I thorough my disaventure
Had lovèd outhir him or Achillès,
Ector, or any mannès créature,
Ye n'olde han had no mercy ne mesure
On me, but alwey had me in repreve ! ⁴¹⁹
This falsè world, allas, who may it leve ?

'What ! Is this al the joye and al the feste ?
Is this your red ? Is this my blisful cas ?
Is this the verray mede of your biheste ?
Is al this peynted proces seyd, allas,
Right for this fyn ? O Lady myn, Pallas,
Thou in this dredful cas for me purveye,
For so astonèd am I that I deye !'

With that she gan ful sorwfully to sike.—
'A ! may it be no bet ?' quod Pandarus ;
'By God I shal no more come here this
wike,
And God to-form, that am mistrusted thus !
I see wel that ye settè lite of us, ⁴³²
Or of our deth ! Allas, I woful wrecche !
Mighte he yit live, of me were naught to
recche !

'O cruel God, O dispitousè Marte !
O Furies three of helle, on you I crye !
So lat me nevere out of this hous departe,
If that I mentè harm or vilanye !
But sith I see my lord mot nedès dye,
And I with him, here I me shrive, and seye
That wikkedly ye don us bothè deye ! ⁴⁴¹

'But sith it liketh you that I be ded,
By Neptunus, that God is of the sec,
For this forth shal I neverè etè bred
Til I myn ownè hertè blood may see !
For certein I wol deye as sone as he.'—
And up hesterte, and on his wey he raughte,
Til she agayn him by the lappè caughte.

432. *wel*, ⁷⁸ *ful wel*.

434. *were*, so J H₄ R Cx. H₃; others *is*.

Criseyde, which that wel nigh starf for fere,
So as she was the ferfullestè wight ⁴⁵⁰
That mightè be, and herde ek with her ere
And saw the sorwful ernest of the knight,
And in his prayèr ek saw non unright,
And for the harm that mightè ek fallè more,
She gan to reweand drede her wondersore,

And thoughtè thus : 'Unhappès fallen
thikke

Alday for love, and in swich maner cas
As men ben cruel in himself and wikke ;
And if this man slee here himself, allas,
In my presènce, it n'il be no solàs ! ⁴⁶⁰
What men wolde of it deme I cannot seye :
It nedeth me ful sleighly for to pleye !'—

And with a sorwful sik she seyde thrye,
'A ! Lord ! What me is tid a sory chance !
For myn estat li'th in a jupartye,
And ek myn emès lif is in balauce !
But nathèles with Goddès governaunce
I shal so don, myn honour shal I kepe,
And ek his lif !'—and stintè for to wepe.

'Of harmès two the lesse is for to chese :
Yit have I leverè maken him good chere
In honour, than myn emès lif to lese ! ⁴⁷²
Ye seyn, ye nothing ellès me requere ?'—
'No, wis,' quod he, 'myn ownè necè
dere !'—

'Now wel !' quod she, 'and I wol do
my peyne !

I shal myn herte aycin my lust constreyne,

'But that I n'il not holden him in honde ;
Ne love a man ne can I naught, ne may
Aycins my wil ; but ellès wil I fonde, ⁴⁷⁹
Myn honour sauf, plesè him fro day to day.
Ther-to n'olde I not onès have seyde nay,
But-that I drede as in my fantasye ;
But, cessè cause, ay cesseth maladye !

454. *harm that mightè ek*, a³ J *harm ek that might*.

457. *and*, a³ R Cx. omit.

460. *nil*, so a³ J ; others *wil*, *wol*.

465. *lith in a*, so H₂ H₄ H₃ R ; *lith in*, J P G H₅ Cx. ; *γ lith now in* (Cl. *now lith in*).

467. *Goddès*, H₂ H₄ H₃ H₅ D *gode* (good).

478, 479. a⁵ read : *Ne love no (a) man, that can no wight ne may Aycins his wil*.

482. *drede*, Cp. *dredde*.

'But here I make a protestacioun,
That in this proces if ye depper go,
That certainly for no savacioun
Of you, though that ye sterven bothé two,
Though al the world on oo day be my fo,
Ne shal I nevere of him han other routhe!'
'I granté wel,' quod Pandar, 'by my
trouthe! 490

'But may I trusté wel to you,' quod he,
'That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye wol it holden trewely to me?'—
'Ye, doutéles,' quod she, 'myn unclé
dere!'—
'Ne that I shal han cause in this matére,'
Quod he, 'to pleyne, or ofter you to preche?'
'Why, no, pardé! What nedeth moré
speche?'

Tho fillen they in othré talés glade,
Til at the laste, 'O goodeem,' quod she tho,
'For love of God which that us bothé
made,
Tel me how first ye wisten of his wo! 501
Wot non of it but ye?'—He seyde,
'No!'—
'Can he wel speke of love?' quod she;
'I preye,
Tel me; for I the bet me shal purveye.'—

Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smile,
And seyde, 'By my trouthe I shal you telle!
This other day, not gon ful longé while,
With-in the palcis gardin, by a welle,
Gan he and I wel half a day to dwelle,
Right for to speken of an ordinaunce 510
How we the Grekés mighten disavaunce.

Sone after that bigonné we to lepe,
And casten with our darts to and fro,
Til at the laste he seyde he woldé slepe;
And on the gres a-doun he leyde him tho;
And I afer gan romen to and fro,

491. to you, γ^8 ther-to.

493. to, so P H₂ H₃; others unto.

500. love of God, H₄ the love; H₃ Cx. γ^8 his love.

504. me shal, a⁸ etc. shal me.

508. With-in, γ^8 In-with.

516. I afer, so J R only; P H₂ yn a fere (!); H₄ G H₃ etc. after; γ^8 ther-after.

Til that I herde, as that I welk allone,
How he bigan ful wofully to grone.

'Tho gan I stalke him softely behinde;
And, sikerly the sothé for to seyne 520
As I can clepe ayein now to my minde,
Right thus to Love he gan him for to
pleyne:

He seyde, "Lord, have routhe upon my
peyne!

Al have I ben rebél in myn entente,
Now, mea culpa, Lord, I me repente!

"O God, that at thy disposicioun
Ledest the fyn, by justé purveyaunce,
Of every wight, my lowe confessioun 528
Accepteingré, and send meswich penaunce
As liketh thee; but from deséspérance,
That may my gost departe away fro thee,
Thou be my sheld, for thy benigneté!

"For certés, Lord, so sore hath she me
wounded,
That stood in blak, with loking of herýen,
That to myn hertés botme it is y-sounded,
Thorough which I wot that I mot nedés dyen.
This is the worse: I dar me not biwryen;
And wel the hotter ben the gledés rede,
That men hem wryen with asschen pale and
dede." 539

'With that he smot his hed a-doun anon,
And gan to muttre, I n'ot what trewely;
And I with that gan stille away to gon,
And leet ther-of as no-thing wist had I,
And com ayein a-non, and stood him by,
And seyde, "Awak, ye slepen al too longe!
It semeth not that Lové doth you longe,

"That slepen so that no man may you
wake!

Who say everé or this so dul a man?"

"Ye, frend," quod he, "do ye your hedés
ake

521. now, so J H₄ etc.; a⁴ R Cx. A omit.

523. routhe upon, J R Cl. routhe on; H₄ G H₃ mercy on (of).

539. wryen; J H₁ wren.

548. evere or this, G or this evere (read ? evere sey or).

For love, and lat me liven as I can !” 550
 But though that he for wo was pale and wan,
 Yit made he tho as fressh a countenance
 As though he sholde have led the newe
 daunce !

‘This passèd forth, til now this other day
 It fil that I com roming al allone
 Into his chaumbre, and fond how that he
 lay
 Upon his bed. But man so sorè grone
 Ne herde I nevere. And what that was
 his mone
 Ne wiste I not ; for, as I was cominge,
 Al sodeynly he left his còmpleynge ; 560

‘Of which I took som-what suspicioun ;
 And ner I com and fond he weptè sore ;
 And, God so wis be my savacioun,
 As nevere of thing hadde I norouthè more ;
 For neither with engine ne with no lore
 Unnethès mighte I fro the deth him kepe,
 That yit fele I myn hertè for him wepe.

‘And God wot, neverè sith that I was born
 Was I so besy no man for to preche, 569
 Ne neverè was to wight so depe y-sworn,
 Or he me tolde who mightè ben his leche !
 But now to you rehersen al his speche,
 Or alle his woful wordès for to soune,
 Ne bid me naught, but ye wol see me
 swoune !

‘But for to save his lif, and ellès nought,
 And to non harm of you, thus am I driven.
 And for the love of God that us hath
 wrought,
 Swich chere him doth, that he and I may
 liven !
 Now have I plat to you myn hertè shriven ;
 And sith ye wot that myn entente is clene,
 Tak hede ther-of, for I non yvel mene. 581

‘And right good thrift, I preye to God,
 have ye,
 That haveswiche oony-caught withoutè net !
 And, be ye wis as ye be fair to see,

551. *wo*, J *G love*.

568. *neverè sith that*, J R *that neverè sith*.

579. *shriven*, J P *I-shriven*.

Wel in the ring than is the ruby set !
 Ther werè neverè two so wel y-met !
 When ye ben his al hool as he is youre,
 Ther mighty God yit graunte us see that
 houre !— 588

‘Nay, therof spak I not, aha !’ quod she,
 ‘As help me God, ye shenden every del !’
 ‘A ! mercy, derè nece !’ anon quod he,
 ‘What-so I spak, I mentè not but wel,
 By Mars, the God that helmèd is of stel !
 Now beth not wroth, my blood, my necè
 dere !’
 ‘Now wel !’ quod she, ‘foryeven be it
 here !’

With this he took his leve and hom he
 wente ;
 And, Lord, so he was glad and wel bigon !
 Criseyde aros, no lenger she ne stente,
 But streight into her closet wente anon, 599
 And sette her doun as stille as any ston,
 And every word gan up and doun to winde
 That he had seyd, as it com her to minde ;

And was somdel astonèd in her thought
 Right for the newè cas. But whan that she
 Was ful avisèd, tho fond she right nought
 Of peril, why she oughte aferd be ;
 For man may love, of possibilité,
 A womman, so his hertè may to-breste,
 And she not love ayein, but-if her leste.

But as she sat allone and thoughtè thus,
 Ascry aros at scarmuch al withoute, 611
 And men cri’de in the strete, ‘See, Troilus
 Hath right now put to flight the Grekès
 route !’

With that gan al her meyné for to shoute,
 ‘A ! Go we see ! Caste up the latis wide !
 Forthorugh this strete he mot to paleys ride ;

588. *yit graunte us see*, so G H₅ R, etc. ; J Cp.
graunte us see ; a³ *us graunte to see*.

591. *A*, γ⁸ *O*.

597. *And*, α⁴ *Ye* ; R Cx. H₃ *A*.

597. *so*, α² γ⁶ omit ; G H₅ *how*.

603. *was*, α⁵ *wex*.

606. *aferd be*, α R Cx. *aferd to be*.

611. *Ascry*, H₄ G *Th ascry*.

615. *latis*, so H₃ only ; P H₄ G Cx. *zatis* ; J etc.
yates.

'For other wey is fro the yaté non
Of Dardanus, ther open is the cheyne !'
With that com he and al his folk anon
An esy pas, riding in routés tweyne, 620
Right as his happy day was, soth to seyne,
For-which, men seith, may not distorbéd be
That shal bitiden of necessité.

This Troilus sat on his bayé stede,
Al arméd save his hed ful richély;
And wounded was his hors, and gan to
blede,
On which he rod a pas ful softély.
But swich a knightly sighté trewély
As was on him, was not withouten faile
To loke on Mars, that God is of bataile !

So lik a man of armés and a knight 631
He was to sen, fulfil'd of heigh prowessse;
For bothe he hadde a body and a might
To don that thing, as well as hardinesse;
And ek to sen him in his gere him dresse,
So fressh, so yong, so weldy seméd he,
It was an hevene upon him for to see !

His helm to-hewén was in twenty places,
That by a tissu heng his bak bihinde;
His sheld to-dasshéd was with swerdes and
maces, 640
In which men mighté many an arwé finde
That thirléd haddé horn and nerf and rinde;
And ay the peplé cri'de, 'Here com'th
our joye !
And next his brother, holder up of Troye !'

For which he wex a litel red for shame,
Whan he the peple upon him herdé cryen,
That to beholde it was a noblé game,
How sobrelíche he casté down his yén.
Criseyde anon gan al his chere aspyen,
And let so softé it in her herté sinke 650
That to her-self she seyde, 'Who yaf me
drinke ?'

617. *is, J Cl. is ther. fro, γ to.*

636. *weldy, so α γ; β worthy.*

640. *swerdes, a² H₃ swerd.*

642. *horn and, a² bothe.*

646. *he the peple, etc., a⁵ he so herde the peple
on him cryen.*

648. *down, a⁵ R adoun.*

649. *Criseyde anon, so a² R; rest Criseyde,
Criseyda.*

650. *it, J H₄ Ad. Cp. omit.*

For of her owné thought she wex al red,
Remembering her right thus, 'Lo, this is he
Which that myn unclé swer'th he mot be
ded

But I on him have mercy and pité';
And with that puré thought for-shaméd, she
Gan in her hed to pulle, and that as faste,
Whil he and al the peplé for-by paste;

And gan to caste and rollen up and doun
Within her thought his excellent prowessse,
And his estat, and also his renoun, 661
His wit, his shap, and ek his gentillesse;
But most her favour was, for his distresse
Was al for her, and thoughte it was a routhe
To slenswichoon, if that he menté trouthe.

Now mighté som envíous janglé thus:
'This was a sodein love! How mighte
it be,

That she so lightly lovéd Troilus
Right for the firsté sighté?'—Ye, pardé!
Now, who-so seith so, mote he neveré thé!
For every thing a ginning hath it nede 671
Or al be wrought, withouten any drede.

For I seye not that she so sodeinly
Yaf him her love, but that she gan encline
To like him first; and I have told you
why;

And after that, his manhod and his pine
Made love within her herté for to mine:
For-which by proces and by good servise
He gat her love, and in no sodein wise.

And also blisful Venus, wel arrayed, 680
Sat in her seventhé hous of hevené tho,
Disposéd wel, and with aspéctés payed,
To helpen sely Troilus of his wo;
And, soth to seyn, she n'as not al a fo
To Troilus in his nativité:
God wot that wel the soner spedde he!

656. (?) MSS. var.; a² .And for that thought
pure ashamyd she; G J etc. γ And with that
thought (J word) for pure (a)shamed she.

670. *seith, J H₃ seyde.*

670. *mote he nevere, a⁵ nevere mote he.*

671. *a, G R of.*

677. *within, R Cx. in.*

677. *herte, so a² Cx. H₃ S₂ Dg.; R inwardly;
rest omit.*

679. *gat, a⁵ wan.*

Now lat us stinte of Troilus a throwe,
That rideth forth; and let us torné faste
Unto Criseyde, that heng her hed ful lowe,
Ther-as she sat alone, and gan to caste 690
Wher-on she wolde apoynte her at the laste,
If it so were her em ne woldé cesse
For Troilus upon her for to presse.

And, Lord! so she gan in her herte arguwe
In this matere of which I have you told;
And what to don best were, and what
t' eschuwe,

That plited she ful ofte in many fold:
Now was her herte warm, now was it cold;
And what she thoughté som-what shal I
write,

As to myn auctour listeth for t' endite. 700

She thoughté first that Troilus' persóne
She knew by sighte, and ek his gentillesse;
And also thoughte, 'It weré not to done
To graunte him love; yit for his worthi-
nesse

It were honóur, with pley and with
gladnesse,

In honesté with swich a lord to dele,
For myn estat, and also for his hele.

'Ek wel wot I my kingés sone is he,
And sith he hath to see me swich delit,
If I wolde outréliche his sighté flee, 710
Paraunter he mighte have me in despit,
Thurgh which I mighté stonde in worsé
plit:

Now were I wis, me haté to purchace
Withouténede, ther I may stonde in grace?

'In every thing I wot ther li'th mesúre:
For though a man forbedé dronkenesse,
He naught forbet, that every créature
Be drinkéles for alwey, as I gesse;
Ek sith I wot for me is his distresse,

694. *And*, J H₄ A.

694. *so*, H₄ G *how*.

694. *herte*, so a² J R H₃ S₂ Dg.; rest *thought*.

696. *l'eschuwe*, so a⁴ Cx. S₂ Dg.; rest *eschewe*.

697. *many*, G H₅ R Cx. H₃ S *many a*.

701. *first*, so a³ J R; G H₃ *ek this*; Cx. H₃
y⁸ *wel*.

703. *And also thoughte*, etc., so H₄ J R; a⁴
And seyde thus, 'Al were it not, etc.; Cx. H₃
y⁸ *And thus she seyde*, 'Al were it not, etc.

I oughté not for that thing him despise,
If it be so, he men'th in goodé wise. 721

'And ek I knowe, of longé time agon,
His thewés goode, and that he is not nice.
N'avauntour, seith men, certeyn, he is
non;

Too wis is he to don so gret a vice;
Ne als I n'il him neveré so cherice
That he may make avaunt by justé cause;
He shal me neveré binde in swich a clause.

'Now sette a cas, the hardest is, y-wis:
Men mighten demen that he loveth me.
What dishonour to myn estat is this? 731
May jch him lette of that? Why nay,
pardé!

I knowe also, and alday here and see,
Men loven wommen al biside hir leve;
And whan hem list no moré, lat hem leve!

'Ek wot I wel he worthy is to have
Of wommen in this world the thriftieste,
As ferforth as she may her honour save;
For out and out he is the worthieste, 739
Save only Ector, which that is the beste;
And yit his lif li'th al now in my cure!
But swich is love, and ek myn aventure!

'Ne me to love, a wónder is it nought;
For wel wot I myself, so God me spede,
Al wolde I that no man wiste of my
thought,

I am oon of the fairest out of drede
And goodliesté, who-so taketh hede;

720. *oughte*, so J H₂ H₄ R; rest *n'oughte*.

721. *If it be*, so J H₄ R; rest *Sith it is*.

726. *als*, J G H₅ *also*.

734. 735. *al biside*, etc. a⁴ (and Ad. altered) *al this toun aboute Be they the wers? Why nay, withouten doute!* (Boc.)

735. *leve*, so J H₄ H₃ R Cx.; y *bilene*. (See i. 686.)

736. 737. *Ek wot I*, etc., so J H₄ R; rest *I thenke ek how he able is for to have, Of al this noble toun the thriftieste* (y⁸ insert ilke before *noble*).

738. *As ferforth as she may*, so J H₄ R; a⁴
That womman is, so she; Cx. H₃ y⁸ *To ben his love, so she*.

741. *li'th al now*, so J; MSS. var. order.

745. *no man*, y⁷ *noon*.

746. *of*, a² Cx. H₃ y⁴ omit (read? *That I am oon the fairest*).

746. *out of*, a³ Cx. *withouten*.

And so men seyn in al the town of Troye.
What wonder is, though he of me have
joye?

'I am myn owné womman, wel at ese,
I thanke it God, as after myn estat, 751
Right yong, and stonde untey'd in lustylese,
Withouten jalouysye or swich debat:
Shal non housbóndé seyn to me "Chek-
mat!"

For either they ben ful of jalouysye,
Or maisterful, or loven novelrye.

'What shal I don? To what fyn live I
thus?

Shal I not love, in cas if that me feste?
What, pardé! I am not religious!
And though that I myn herté sette at reste
Upon this knight that is the worthiceste, 761
And kepe alwey myn honour and myname,
By allé right it may do me no shame!

But right as whan the sonné shineth brighte
In March that chaungeth ofté time his face,
And that a cloude is put with wind to flighte,
Which oversprat the sonne as for a space,
A cloudy thought gan thorough her soulé
pace,

That overspradde her brighté thoughtés
alle,

So that for fere almóste she gan to falle.

That thought was this: 'Allas! sith I am
free, 771

Sholde I now love, and putte in jupartye
My sikernesce, and thrallen libérté?
Allas! how dorste I thenken that solýe?
May I not wel in other folk aspye
Hir dredful joye, hir cónstreynt, and hir
peyne?

Ther loveth non that she n'ath why to
pleyne!

749. *is*, so J etc.; *a³ etc. is it*; G *ist*.

751. *after*, J R *of*; Cx. *for*.

758. *if*, J *be*; *a³ omit*.

759. *pardé*, J *y pardieux*.

759. *not*, H₃ Cx. *no*.

761. *Upon this knight*, J *unwist of him*.

768. *soulé*, so J G *y*; *a³ R Cx. H₃ herte*.

775. *in*, J *by*.

777. *why*, so G Ad. only; J *we r* (!); rest *wey*.
(*Wey*, meaning *woe*, may be the correct reading.)

'For love is yit the mosté stormy lif,
Right of himself, that everé was bigonne;
For everé som mistrust or nicé strif 780
Ther is in love, som cloude is over that
sonne;

Therto we wrecched wommen nothing
conne

Whan us is wo, but wepe, and sitte and
thinke:

Our wreche is this, our owné wo to drinke.

'Also these wikked tongés ben so prest
To speke us harm, ek men ben sountrewe,
That, right anon as cesséd is hir lest,
So cesseth love, and forth to love a-newe!
But harm y-don is don, who-so it rewe!
For though these men for love hem first to-
rende, 790
Ful sharp biginning breketh ofte at ende.

'How ofté time hath it y-knowén be,
The tresoun that to wommen hath be do!
To what fyn is swich love, I can not see,
Or wher becom'th it whan it is a-go;
Ther is no wight that wot, I trowé so,
Wher it becom'th: lo, no wight on it
sporneth:

That erst was no thing, into nought it
torneth.

'How bisy, if I love, ek moste I be
To plesen hem that jangle of love and
demen, 800
And coye hem, that they seyn non harm of
me;

For, though ther be no causé, yit hem semen
Al be for harm that folk hir frendés quemen;
And who may stoppen every wikked tonge,
Or soun of bellés whil that they be ronge?'

And after that her thought began to clere,
And seyde, 'He which that nothing under-
taketh,

Nothing acheveth, be him loth or dere.'

781. *that*, G Cx. *the*.

783. *wepe and sitte*, *a⁵ Cx. sitte (and) wepe*.

784. *to*, G R H₃ *we*.

792. *hath it y-knownen be*, so Cx. H₃ *y*; *a⁵ J R*
may men rede and see.

800. *demen*, so *a*; J and others *dremen*.

801. *thit*, *y omit*.

808. *acheveth*, *y n'acheveth*.

And with another thought her herté
quaketh ;
Than slepeth hope, and after drede
awaketh ; 810

Now hot, now cold ; but thus betwixé tweye
She rist her up, and wente her for to pleye.

A-doun the stayre anon right tho she wente
Into the gardin, with her neces three ;
And up and doun they maden manya wente,
Flexippe and she, Tarbe and Antigone,
To pleyen, that it joyé was to see ;
And other of her wommen, a gret route,
Her folwed in the gardin al aboute.

This yerd was large, and railéd alle th'
aléyes, 820

And shadwed wel with blosmy bowés grene ;
Y-benched newe, and sonded alle the weyes,
In which she walketh arm in arm bitwene ;
Til at the laste Antigone the shene
Gan on a Trojan lay to singen clere,
That it an hevené was her vois to here.

She seyde, 'O Love, to whom I have and
shal

Ben humblé subgit, trewe in myn entente
As I best can, to you, Lord, give ich al
For everé mo myn hertés lust to rente ! 830
For neveré yit thy gracé no wight sente
So blisful cause as me, my lif to lede
In allé joye and seurté, out of drede.

'Ye, blisful God, han me so wel biset
In love, y-wis, that al that bereth lif
Imaginen ne coude how to be bet ;
For, Lord, withouten jalousye or strif,
I lové oon which is most éntentif

812. *wente her*, J G² *wente*.

813. *A-doun*, J H⁴ R *And doun*.

814. *the*, J R *her* ; a² *a*.

815. *they*, y⁶ *ther* ; H³ *the*.

816. *and she*, y⁶ *she*.

821. *blosmy*, H⁴ Cx. H³ *blosmed* (see *Rom. Rose*, 108).

822. *Y-benched*, P R H⁵ y⁶ *And benched*.

825. *lay*, so a⁵ J R ; Cx. H³ y¹ *song*.

834. *Ye*, J Cx. and others *The*.

834. *han*, J Cx. *hath*.

835. *al*, H⁴ H¹ *alle*.

835. *bereth*, P H⁴ R *beryn*.

837. *or*, J *and*.

838. *which is most*, so a² J H⁵ Cx. D Cl. ; G R H³ S S² *which that is most* ; H⁴ A H¹ Cp *which that most is*.

To serven wel, unwery or unfeyned,
That everé was, and leest with harm dis-
teyned. 840

'As he that is the welle of worthinesse,
Of trouthe ground, mirour of goodlihed,
Of wit Apollo, ston of sikernesse,
Of vertu rote, of lust findere and hed,
Thorough which is allé sorwé fro me ded,—
Y-wis, I love him best, so doth he me :
Now good thrift have he, wher-so that
he be !

'Whom sholde I thanken but you, God
of Love,
Of al this blisse, in which to bathe I ginne ?
And thankéd be ye, Lord, for that I love !
This is the righté lif that I am inne, 851
To flemen allé maner vice and sinne !
This doth me so to vertu for t' entende,
That day by day I in my wil amende.

'And who-so seith that for to love is vice,
Or thraldom, though he fele in it distresse,
He outhir is envious or right nice,
Or is unmighty, for his shrewédnesse,
To love. Lo, swiché maner folk, I gesse,
Defamen Love, as nothing of him knowe :
They speken, but they benten nevere his
bowe ! 861

'What ! Is the sonné wers of kindé right,
Though that a man, for feblesse of his
yen,
May not endure on it to see for bright ?
Or love the wers, though wrecches on it
cryen ?

Nowe is worth, that may no sorwé dryen ;
And for-thy, who that hath a hed of verre,
For cast of stonés war him in the werre !

'But I with al myn herte and al my might,
As I have seyde, wol love unto my laste 870
My deré herte, and al myn owné knight ;
In which myn herté growén is so faste,

840. *disteyned*, so G R Cp. and others ; J and others *disteyned*.

843. *sikernes*, J H⁴ Cx. S H¹ Cl. *secrenesse*.

850. *ye*, a² J G² *thou*.

859. *Lo*, so J H⁴ R ; rest *For*.

868. *For*, so J H⁴ R D ; others *Fro*.

And his in me, that it shal everé laste :
Al dredde I first to love him to biginne,
Now wot I wel ther is no peril inne !'

And of her song right with that word she
stente ;

And therewithal, 'Now, necé,' quod
Criseyde,

'Who made this song now with so good
entente ?'

Antigoné answérde anon and seyde,
'Madame, y-wis, the goodliesté mayde
Of gret estat in al the toun of Troye, 881
And let her lif in most honóur and joye.'

'For-sothé so it semeth by her song !'
Quod tho Criseyde, and gan ther-with to
site,

And seyde, 'Lord, is ther such blisse among
These lovers, as they conné faire endite ?'

'Ye, wis !' quod fresshe Antigoné the white,
'For alle the folk that han or ben on-live
Ne conné wel the blisse of love discrive.

'But wené ye that every wrecché wot 890
The parfit blisse of lové ? Nay, y-wis !
They wenen al be love, if oon be hot !
Do wey, do wey, they wot no thing of this !
Men mosten axe at scintés, if it is
Aught fair in hevené, (why ? for they
can telle !)

And axen fendes if it be foul in helle.'

Criseyde therto no-thing her answérde,
But seyde, 'Y-wis, it wol be night as faste !'
But every word which that she of her herde,
She gan to prenten in her herté faste ; 900
And ay gan love her lassé for t' agaste

874. *dredde*, J etc. *drede*.

878. *now with*, so J H₄ R H₃ γ (exc. Cl.) ;
others *with*.

879. *answérde anon*, J *anon answerde* ; G²
omit *anon*.

884. *sike* (?), all *sike*, *syke*. (Skeat's emendation
is here adopted, to avoid the assonant rhyme.)

891. *Nay*, so a β ; J γ *Why*, *nay*.

896. *axen*, J G² *axeth*.

896. *if it be*, so a β ; J H₃ γ *is it*.

897. *therto no-thing her*, so a β (var. order, J
nothing therto her) ; Cx. H₃ γ *unto that purpos*
nought (S lye).

901. *love*, J P omit ; G *sche*.

Than it dide erst, and sinken in her herte,
That she wex somewhat able to converte.

The dayés honour, and the hevenés ye,
The nightés fo, (al this clepe I the sonne)
Gan westren faste, and downward for to
wrye,

As he that hadde his dayés cours y-ronne ;
And whité thingés gan to waxen donne
For lak of light, and sterrés for t' apere,
That she and alle her folk in wente i-fere.

So whan it likéd her to gon to reste, 911
And voided werén tho that voiden oughte,
She seyde that to slepen wel her leste :
Her women sone unto her bed her broughte.
Whan al was hust tho lay she stille and
thoughte

Of al this thing ; the maner and the wise
Reherse it nedeth nought, for ye ben wise !

A nightingale upon a cedré grene
Under the chambré wal ther-as she lay,
Ful loudé song ayein the moné shene, 920
Paraunter, in his briddés wise, a lay
Of lové which that made his herté gay ;
I him herkned she so longe in good entente,
That at the laste the dedé slep her hente.

And as she slep, anon right tho her mette
How that an egle, fetheréd whit as bon,
Under her brest his longé clawés sette,
And out her herté rente, and that anon,
And dlide his herte into her brest to gon ;
Of which she nought agroos, ne no-thing
smerte ; 930

And forth he fleigh, with herté left for
herte.

Now lat her slepe, and we our talés holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleis riden

908. *gan to waxen*, so a β ; Cx. H₃ γ *waxen*
dimme aul.

910. *in*, so J H₅ R H₃ γ ; a³ G Cx. *hem*.

912. *tho*, H₁ γ *they*.

914. *unto*, γ *til*.

922. *which that*, etc., so a β (a² *her for his*) ;
Cx. H₃ γ *that made her herte fressh and gay*.

923. *Him*, so J H₄ R H₅ ; a² *Her* ; others *That*.

924. *That*, a etc. *Til*.

928. *rente*, H₅ H₃ γ *he rente*.

Fro th' ilkē scarmuch of the whiche I tolde,
And in his chambrē sit and hath abiden,
Til two or three of his messāges yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him so faste,
Til they him founde and broughte him at
the laste.

This Pandarus com leping in at ones, 939
And seydē thus, 'Who hath ben wel y-bete
To-day, with swerdēs and with slingē-
stones,

But Troilus, that hath caught himan hete !'
And gan to jape, and seydē, 'Lord, ye
swete !

But ris and lat us soupe and go to reste !'
And he answeydē, 'Do we as thee leste !'

With al the hastē goodly that they mighte,
Theyspedde hem fro thesoper and to bedde ;
And every wight out at the dore him dighte,
And wher him liste upon his wey him
spedde :

But Troilus, that thoughte his hertē bledde
For wo, til that he herdē som tidinge, 951
Heseydē, 'Frend, shal I now wepe or singe ?'

Quod Pandarus, 'Bestille, and lat me slepe,
And don thy hood ; thy nedēs speddē be !
And chees if thou wolt daunce, or singe,
or lepe !

At shortē wordēs, thou shalt truste in me !
Sirē, my necē wol don wel by thee
And love thee best, by God and by my
trouthe, 958

But lak of pūrsuit make in thy slouthē !

'For thus ferforth have I thy werk bigonne
Fro day to day, til this day by the morwe
I her love of frendship have I to thee wonne,

934. *th' ilke (?)*, all the.

937. *so, y ful.*

943. *ye, a² y⁴ so ye.*

945. *answeyde, H₃ y⁷ answerde him.*

947. *and to, so J H₄ G² R Cx. H₃; a² to her;*

y⁷ unto.

949. *him spedde, y³ he spedde.*

950. *that, y⁸ omits.*

953. *Be, so J R Cx. H₃; rest Ly.*

955. *daunce, or singe, so J Da²; R daunce, singe;*

H₄ G² Cx. H₃ singe, daunce; y singe or daunce.

956. *truste in, so J etc.; a² trust to; y trowe.*

957. *Sire, Cx. And (read? And sir).*

960. *have I, J I have I (!); H₃ y I have.*

And therto hath she leyd her feith to borwe:
Algate a foot is hameled of thy sorwe !'—
What sholde I lenger sermoun of it holde ?
As ye han herd bifore, al he him tolde.

But right as flourēs, thorough the cold of night
Y-closēd, stouping on hir stalkēs lowe,
Redressen hem ayein the sonnē bright, 969
And spreden on hir kindē cours by rowe,
Right so gan tho his yēn up to throwe
This Troilus, and seydē, 'O Venus dere,
Thy might, thy grace, y-heried be it here !

And to Pandarc he held up bothe his
hondes,

And seydē, 'Lord, al thyn be that I have !
For I am hool : al brosten be my bondes !
A thousand Troyēs who-so that me yave,
Ech after other, God so wis me save,
Ne mightē me so gladen ; lo, myn herte !
It spredeth so for joye, it wol to-sterne !

'But, Lord, how shal I don ? How shal
I liven ? 981

Whan shal I next my derē hertē see ?
How shal this longē time away be driven,
Til that thou be ayein at her fro me ?
Thou mayst answeyde, "Abid, abid !"

But he
That hangeth by the nekkē, soth to seyne,
In gret disese abideth for the payne !'

'Al esily, now, for the love of Marte !'
Quod Pandarus, 'for every thing hath
time : 989

So longe abid, til that the night departe,
For al so siker as thou li'st here by me,
And God to-forn, I wol be ther at prime ;
And for-thy, werk somewhat as I shal seye,
Or on som other wight this chargē leye !

'For, pardē, God wot, I have everē yit
Ben redy thee to serve ; and to this night

963. *therto, y⁸ also.*

965. *lenger, J R long(e).*

967. *the, J a² H₅ omit.*

967. *of, G H₅ omit; D on.*

968. *stouping, so H₄; a² stoupyn; J and others*

stoupen.

977. *Troyes (Boc.), y⁴ Troians.*

978. *so wis me, J R so my soule.*

Have I not feynéd, but emforth my wit
Don al thy lust, and shal with al my might
Do now as I shal seyn, and fare aright ;
And if thou n'ilt, wite al thy-self thy care !
On me is nought along thyn yvel fare ! 1001

'I wot wel that thou wiser art than I
A thousand fold ; but if I were as thou,
God help me so, as I wolde outrély
Right of mynownc hond write her right now
A lettre, in which I wolde her tellen how
I ferde amis, and her biseche of routhe :
Now help thy-self, and leve it not for
slouthe !

'And I my-self shal therwith to her gon ;
And, whan thou wost that I am with her
there, 1010
Worth thou upon a courser right anon,
Ye hardily, right in thy besté gere,
And rid forth by the place, as nought ne
were ;

And thou shalt finde us, if I may, sittinge
At som windowe, into the strete lokinge.

'And, if thee list, than maystow us saluwe ;
And upon me mak thou thy countenance ;
But by thy lif be war that thou eschuwe
To tarien ought ! God shilde us fro mis-
chaunce !

Rid forth thy wey, and hold thy govern-
aunce ! 1020

And we shal speke of thees somewhat, I trowe,
Whan thou art gon, to don thine erés glowe !

'Touching thy lettré, thou art wisy-nough :
I wot thou n'ilt it dignéliche endite,
As make it with these argumentés tough :

1005. *Right of*, J γ^6 *Of*.

1005. *right now*, a³ Cx. *now*.

1008. *not for slouthe*, a² R Cx. H₃ *for no slouthe*.

1009. *shal*, γ^6 *wol*.

1010. *that*, so H₅ R Cx. γ^6 ; rest omit.

1011. *Worth thou*, so a² γ^6 ; H₃ *Lepe thou*; rest *Worth(e)*.

1017. *mak thou*, so H₄ H₅ γ^6 ; H₂ R *thou make*; rest *make*.

1018. *that thou*, Cx. H₃ γ^6 *and faste*.

1024. *dignéliche*, so a² H₃ γ ; J *clerkissly*; Cx. *clerkly*; H₄ *clergaly*; R *papally*; G² *dignéliche ne mystilliche* (read ! *deynonsliche*).

1025. *As*, a² *Or*; H₄ *Ne*; G *As to*.

Ne scrivenly ne craftily thou write ;
Beblotte it with thy terés ek a lite :
And if thou write a goodly word al softe,
Though it be good, rherce it not too ofte !

'For though the besté harpour upon live
Wolde on the besté sounéd joly harpe 1031
That everé was, with alle his fingres five,
Toucheay oo streng, or ay oo werblé harpe,
Al were his nailés pointed neveres o sharpe,
It sholdé maken every wight to dulle
To here his glee, and of his strokés fulle.

'Ne jompre ek no discordaunt thing i-fere,
As thus, to usen termés of phisik
In lovés termés : hold of thy matére 1039
The forme alwcy, and do that it be lik :
For, if a peyntour woldé peynte a pik
With asses feet, and hede it as an ape,
It cordeth nought ; so n'ere it but a jape !'

This counseil likéd wel to Troilus ;
But as a drefful lover seyde he this :
'Allas ! my deré brother Pandarus,
I am ashaméd for to write, y-wis,
Lest of myn innocence I seyde a-mis,
Or that she n'olde it for despit receyve ;
Than were I ded, ther mighte it nothing
weyve !' 1050

To that Pandaré answérdé, 'Yif thee lest,
Do that I seye, and lat me therwith gon ;
For, by that Lord that forméd est and west,
I hope of it to bringe answeére anon
Right of her hond ! And if that thou
n'ilt non,

Lat ben ! And sory mote he ben his live,
Aycinsthy lust that helpeth thee to thrive !'

Quod Troilus, 'Depardieux, I assente !
Sith that thee list, I wol arise and write !

1026. *scrivenly*, so H₅ R Cx. ; J H₄ *scriven-issli(che)*; others *scrivenisssh*.

1026. *thou*, so J H₄ G² H₃; R omits; Cx. *it*; a² γ *thou it*.

1034. *Al were*, so R only; rest *Were*.

1042. *hede*, J *heuede*.

1044. *to*, J Cx. H₅ omit ; γ^6 *unto*.

1045. *dredful*, J *dred*.

1045. *seyde he*, so H₄ G²; R *seyde*; J a² H₃ γ *he seyde*.

1055. *Right*, γ^6 omit (see l. 1005).

And blisful God preye ich with good
entente, ¹⁰⁶⁰
The viage and the lettre I shal endite,
Sospedeit! And thou, Mínerua, the white,
Yif thou me wit my lettré to devise!
And sette him doun and wrot right in this
wise.

First, he gan her his righté lady calle,
His hertés lif, his lust, his sorwes leche,
His blisse, and ek these othrè termés allé
That in swich cas ye lovers allé seche;
And in ful humblé wise as in his speche
He gan him recomaunde unto her grace:
To telle al how, it axeth muchel space.

And after this ful lowly he her preye ¹⁰⁷²
To be not wroth, though he of his folýe
So hardy was to her to write; and seyde
That love it made, or ellés moste he dye;
And pitously gan mercy for to crye;
And after that he seyde, and leighfulloude,
Him-self was litel worth, and lesse he
coude;

And that she sholde han his conning ex-
cused,
That litel was; and ek he dredde her so;
And his unworthinesse he ay acused; ¹⁰⁸¹
And after that than gan he telle his wo;
But that was infinit for ay and o;
And how he wolde in trouthe alwey him
holde;
And his adieux he made, and gan it folde.

And with his salté terés gan he bathe
The ruby in his signet, and it sette
Upon the wax deliverliche and rathe;

1060. *with*, a² *in*.
1065. *he gan*, a² *gan he*.
1068. *ye*, so H₄ R C²; J *the*; a² *γ these*.
1079. *And that she sholde*, Cx. S *And preye*
her; H₅ *Besechyng her*.
1083. *infinit*, H₂ *infynite* (later); H₄ *infenit*;
G *enfeyned*; H₅ *infynith*; P (later) J Cx. *γ*
endeles.
1083. *for ay and o*, so H₂ (later) H₄ G² J R;
P (later) Cx. *γ withouten ho*.
1084. *how*, Cx. *γ seyde*.
1085. *And his adieux he made*, etc., so R, and
a² G² (adew and omitting *he*); H₄ *And thus an*
end made, etc.; J Cx. *γ And redde it over and*
gan the lettre folde.

Therwith a thousand timés, or he lette,
He kisté tho the lettré that he shette,
And seyde, 'Lettre, a blisful destiné ¹⁰⁹¹
Thee shapen is: my lady shal thee see!'

This Pandar up therwith, and that be-time
On morwe, and to his necés paleis sterte,
And seide, 'Slepé ye, and it is prime?'
And gan to jape, and seide thus: 'Myn
herte,

So fresch is it though lové do it smerte,
I may not slepen nevere a Mayés morwe!
I have a joly wo, a lusty sorwe!' ¹⁰⁹⁹

Criseydé, whan that she her unclé herde,
With dredful herte, and désirous to here
The cause of his comingé, thus answérde:
'Now by your fey, myn unclé,' quod she,
'dere,

What maner wind gideth you hider here?
Tel us your joly wo and your penaunce!
How ferforth be ye put in lovés daunce?'

'By God,' quod he, 'I hoppe alwey
behinde!'

And she to laughe, as though her herté brest.
Quod Pandarus, 'Loke alwey that ye finde
Game in myn hood! But herkneth if you
lest. — ¹¹¹⁰

Ther is right now come into touné a gest,
A Grek espýe, and telleth newé thingés,
For-which come I to tellé you tidinges.

'Into the gardin go w', and ye shal here
Al privily of this a long sermoun.'—
With that they wenten arm in arm i-fere
Into the gardin fro the chaumbré doun;

1091. *Lettre*, G omits; J R *I wis*.
1093. *up therwith*, Cx. *γ took the lettre*.
1095. Cx. *γ read*: *And faste he swor that it*
was passed prime.
1097. *is it*, J Cx. *γ it is*.
1097. *though love do it*, Cx. *γ although it sore*.
1104. *windé*, so a² R Cx.; others *windes*.
1104. *you hider*, so a² only; others *you, now*,
now you, you now.
1108. *as though*, so a² H₅ R S; H₄ G *and*
thought(tr); Cx. D *hir thought*; J Ad. *γ² it*
thought; S₂ Dg. *yet if*.
1109. *alwey that ye*, so J H₄ Cx. H₅ H₃ S; G
R *that ye alwey*; a² *γ² alwey ye*.
1113. *For-which*, J H₄ *For-why*; R *for-*
thy.
1113. *come I*, Cx. *γ² I come*.
1113. *tidinges*, R *γ² newe tidinges*.

And whan that he so fer was, that the soun
Of that he spak ther no man heren mighte,
Heseide her thus, and out the lettrè plighite :

‘Lo, he that is al hoolly yourès free 1121
Him recomaundeth lowly to your grace,
And sent to you this lettrè here by me :
Ayiseth you on it whan ye han space,
And of som goodly answer you purchácc,
Or, help me God so, pleylnly for to seyne,
He may not longè liven for the peyne !’—

Ful dredfully tho gan she stonden stille,
And took it nought, but al her humblè chere
Gan for to chaunge; and seidè, ‘Scrit ne
bille, 1130
For love of God, that toucheth swich matère
Ne bring me non; and also, unclè dere,
To myn estat have more reward, I preye,
Than to his lust! What sholde I morè
seye?

‘And loketh now if this be resonáble,
And letteth not for favour ne for slouthe
To seyn a soth! Now were it covenáble
To myn estat, by God and by your trouthe,
To taken it, or to han of him routhe,
In harming of my-self, or in repreve? 1140
Ber it ayein, for Him that ye on leve!’—

This Pandarus gan on her for to stare,
And seidè, ‘Now is this the mostè wonder
That evere I say! Lat be this nicè fare!
To dethé mote I smiten be with thonder,
If, for the citè which that stondeth yonder,
To you a lettrè wolde I bringe or take,
To harm of you! What list you thus to
make? 1148

‘But thus ye faren wel nigh alle and some,
That he that most desireth you to serve,
Of him ye recché leest wher he bicomè,

1121. *Of that he spak, a⁵ Of his wordes. ther,*
1122. *only; H₃ D Cp. etc. spake (for spak).*

1129. *heren, R hit heren.*

1133. *sent to you, so a² only; J etc. sente you;*
others sent you.

1125. *of, a² G² omit.*

1130. *Scrit, J Cx. Script.*

1143. *moste, γ grettest.*

1148. *to, G γ it.*

And whether that he live or ellès sterve!
But, for al that that evere I may deserve,
Refuse it not!’ quod he, and hente her
faste,

And in her bosom down the lettrè thraste,

And seide her, ‘Cast it now away anon,
That folk may sen and gauren on us
tweye!’

Quod she, ‘I can abide til they be gon!’
And gan to smile, and seide him, ‘Em,
I preye 1159

Swich answer as you list your-self purveye;
For trewely I níl no lettrè write!’—
‘No? than wol I,’ quod he, ‘so ye endite!’

Therwith she lough, and seidè, ‘Go we
dine!’

And he gan at him-self to japè faste,
And seidè, ‘Necce, I have so gret a pine
For love, that everich other day I faste!’
And gan his bestè japès forth to caste,
And made her so to laughe at his folýe,
That she for laughter wendè for to dye.

And whan that she was comèn into halle,
‘Now em,’ quod she, ‘we wol go dine
anon!’ 1171

And gan some of her wommen for to calle,
And streight into her chaumbrè gan she
gon;

But of her businessè this was oon
Amongès othrè thingès, out of drede,
Ful prively this lettrè for to rede.

Avisèd word by word in every line,
And fond no lak, she thoughte he coude
good,

And up it putte, and wente her in to dine;
But Pandarus, that in a study stood, 1180
Or he was war, she took him by the hood,

1155. *down the lettre, etc., H₄ R Cx., and J S*
(he thraste), and a² (caste); G² γ² the lettre doun
he thraste (Dg, caste).

1156. *Cast it now, a² S; J Cast it; R Cast it*
not; Cx. Cast it faste; γ Now cast it.

1164. *he, J R Pandare; G Pandarus. R at*
himself gan iape faste.

1172. *for to, so J G; a² Cx. omit; H₄ H₅ in*
to; R gan she; γ to her.

1174. *business. Cp. businesses.*

1181. *him, D γ³ omit; R tho.*

And seide, 'Ye were caught or that ye wiste!'

'I vouché sauf!' quod he, 'Do what you liste!'

Tho wesshen they, and sette hem down, and ete;

And after noon ful sleighly Pandarus Gan drawe him to the window next the strete,

And seide, 'Necce, who hath arayéd thus The yonder hous that stant afor-yein us?'

'Which hous?' quod she, and com for to biholde,

And knew it wel, and whos it was him tolde;

And fillen forth in speche of thingés smale, And seten in the window bothé tweye.

Whan Pandarus saw time unto his talc, And say wel that hir folk were alle aweye, 'Now, necce myn, tel on!' quod he, 'I seye, How liketh you the lettré that he wrot? Can he theron? For by my trouthe I n'ot!'

Therwith al rosy hewéd tho wex she, And gan to humme, and seide, 'So I trowe!'

'Aquite him wel, for Goddés love!' quod he,

'My-self to-medés wol the lettré sowe!' And held his hondés up, and fel on knowe; 'Now, goodé Necce, be it nevere so lite, Yif me the labour it to sowe and plite.'

'Ye, for I can so writé,' quod she tho, 'Andeek In'ot what that I sholde him seye.'

'Nay, necce,' quod Pandaré, 'sey not so! Yit at the lesté thanketh him, I preye, Of his good-wil, and doth him not to deye! Now, for the love of me, my necce deré, Refuseth not at this time my preyére!'

1189. *com*, so a^3 Cx.; others *gan*.

1193. *unto*, H_4 on *to*; J G^2 Cl *to*.

1195. *seye*, R *preye*.

1196. *he wrot*, so a^2 ; others *ye wote*(e).

1202. *fel*, γ *sat*.

1205. *Ye, for I can so write*, H_5 *Ful feibly can I write*. (The meaning of the text is not evident.)

1206. *that*, so P R only.

1206. *him*, Cx. γ^8 to *him*.

1209. *and*, J G^2 Cx. O.

1210. *me*, J G^2 *god*.

1211. *time*, J a^3 *G tid*(e).

'Depardieux,' quod she, 'God leve al be wel!

God help me so, this is the firsté lettre That evere I wrot, ye, al or any del!— And int' a closet for t' avise her bettre She went allone, and gan her herte unfettere Out of Disdeynés prison but a lite, And sette her down, and gan a lettré write;

Of which to telle in short is myn entente Th' effect, as fer as I can understonde.— She thanked him of al that he wel mente Towárdés her, but holden him in honde She n'oldé nought, ne make her selven bonde

In love; but as his suster him to pleshe She wolde ay fain, to don his herte an ese.

She shette it, and to Pandar in gan gon Ther-as he sat and lokéd into strete, And doun she sette her by him, on a ston Of jaspere, upon a quishshin gold y-bete, And seide, 'As wisly help me God the grete, I neveré dide a thing with moré payne Than writen this, to which ye me constreyné!'

And took it him.—He thanked her, and seide,

'God wot, of thing ful ofté loth bigonne Com'th endé good! And necce myn, Criseyde, That ye to him of hard now ben y-wonne, Oughte he be glad, by God and yonder sonne,

For-why men seith, "Impressiounés lighte Ful lightly ben ay redy to the flighte."

'But ye han pley'd the tirant ny too longe, And hard was it your herté for to grave, Now stint, that ye no lenger on it honge (Al woldé ye the forme of daunger save But hasteth you to don him joyé have

1215. *int'*, a^2 *in*.

1217. *Disdeynes*, a^3 Cx. *disdeynous*.

1225. *ay*, γ omit.

1227. *into strete*, so J Cp.; Cl. *into a strete*; R *to the strete*; a^3 etc. *into the strete*.

1229. *gold*, P H_4 *with gold*; H_2 R Cx. *of gold*.

1240. *the*, γ omit.

For trusteth wel too longe y-don hardnésse
Causeth despit ful oftē for distresse.²—

And right as they declamed this matére,
Lo, Troilus, right at the stretés ende,
Com riding with his tenthē some i-fere
Al softely, and thiderward gan bende ¹²⁵⁰
Ther-as they sete, as was his wey to wende
To paleis-ward; and Pandar him espiðle,
And seicðe, 'Nece, y-see who com'th here
ride !

'O flee not in (he seeth us, I suppose),
Lest he may thinken that ye himeschuwe !'
'Nay, nay !' quod she, and wex as red as
rose.

With that he gan her humblēly saluwe
With dredful chere, and ofte his hewēs
muwe ;

And up his look debónerly he caste,
And bekkéd on Pandáre, and forth he paste.

God wot if he sat on his hors aight, ¹²⁶¹
Or goodly was biseyn that ilkē day !
God wot whe'r he was lik a manly knight !
What sholde I drecche, or telle of his array ?
Criseyde, which that alle these thingés say,
To telle in short, her likéd al in-fere,
His person, his array, his look, his chere,

His goodly maner, and his gentillesse
So wel, that neveré sith that she was born
Ne haddé she swich routhe of his distresse ;
And, how-so she hath hard ben her-biforn,
To God hope I she hath now caught a
thorn, ¹²⁷²

She shal not pulle it out this nexté wike !
God send mo swiché thornés on to pike !

Pandáre, which that stood her fasté by,
Felte iren hot, and he bigan to smite ;
And seicðe, 'Nece, I preye you hertely,
Tel me that I shal axen you a lité :
A womman that were of his deth to wite,

1247. *declamed*, a³ etc. *declared*.

1253. *y-see*, J R *se*; H₄ omits; G Cx. *lo*.

1257. *humblēly*, a² γ⁸ *humblly lo*.

1258. *muwe*, a² G etc. *newe*.

1270. *swich*, R *swich a*.

1272. *I*, so R γ⁸ only; rest omit. H₃ *Thorow good hope*.

Withoute his gilt, but for her lak of routhe,
Were it wel don ?²—Quod she, 'Nay, by
my trouthe !' ¹²⁸¹

'God help me so,' quod he, 'ye sey me
soth !

Ye felen wel your-self that I not lye !

Lo, yond he rit !²—'Ye,' quod she, 'so
he doth.'² -

'Wel,' quod Pandáre, 'as I have told you
thrye,

Iat be your nicé shame and your folýe,
And spek with him in esing of his herte !
Lat nicétē not do you bothé smerte !'

But theron was to heven and to done ! ¹²⁸⁹

'Consideréd allé thing it may not be.—

And why for speche?—And it were ek
too sone

To graunte him yit so gret a libérté.'

For pleynly her entente, as seicðe she,
Was for to love him unwist, if she mighte,
And guerdone him with no-thing but with
sighte.

But Pandarus thoughte, 'It shal not be so ;

If that I may, this nice opinioun

Shal not ben holden fully yerés two !'²—

What sholde I make of this a longsermoun ?

If he moste assente on that conclusioun ¹³⁰⁰

As for the time; and when that it was
eve,

And al was wel, he ros and took his leve.

And on his wey ful faste homward he
spedde,

And right forjoye he felte his herté daunce ;

And Troilus he fond allone a-bedde,

That lay, as don these lovers, in a traunce

Bi-twixen hope and derk deséspérance ;

But Pandarus, right at his in-cominge,

Hé song, as who seith, 'Somwhat I thee
bringé !'

1280. *lak of*, γ⁸ *lakked*.

1283. *not*, a³ *ne*.

1291. *speche*, γ⁸ *shame*.

1292. *yit*, so } (γ² Cx.; rest omit.

1306. *thuse*, J *the*; G *ye*. (See l. 1068.)

1309. *Somwhat I thee*, so R only; S₁ *Som-
what now I*; Th. *Lo, somewhat I*; rest *som-
what I*.

And seyde, 'Who is in his bed so sone
'Y-buried thus?'—'It am I, frend!' quod
he. 1311

'Who? Troilus? Nay, help me so the
mone,'

Quod Pandarus, 'thou shalt arise and see
A charmè that was right now sent to thee,
The whichè can thee hele of thyn accesse
So thou thy-self do forth thy bisnesse.'

'Ye, thorough the might of God!' quod
Troilus.—

And Pandarus gan him the lettrè take,
And seide, 'Pardé, God hath holpen us!
Have here a light, and look on al this
blake!' 1320

Lord, oftè gan the hertè glade and quake
Of Troilus, whil that he gan it rede,
So as the wordès yave him hope and drede.

But finally he took al for the beste
That she him wrot; forsomwhat he beheld
On which he thoughte he mighte his
hertè reste,

Al coverèd she the wordès under sheld.
Thus to the morè worthy part he held,
That, what for hopeand Pandarus' biheste,
His gretè wo foryede he at the leste. 1330

But, as we may alday our-selven see,
Thorough morè wode or col, the morè fir,
Right so, encresseth hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful ofte encresseth ek desir:
Or, as an ook com'th of a litel spir,
So thorough this lettrè which that she him
sente,

Encressen gan desir, of which he brente.

Wherefore I seye alway that day and night
This Troilus gan to desiren more
Than he dide erst, thorough hope, and
dide his might 1340

1315. *thee hele*, so R only; others *helen ther*.
1316. *So thou thy-self do forth*, so R only;
a J Cx. *So that thou do forth(with); γ If thou
do forthwith al*.

1321. *Lord*, so a³ J G²; R Cx. γ⁹ *But*.

1323. *and*, a³ γ or.

1326. *which he*, J γ *which him*.

1333. *encresseth*, so J G²; others *encres* of
(read *encresse*).

To pressen on, as by Pandarès lore,
And writen to her of his sorwes sore:
Fro day to day he let it not refreyde,
That by Pandarèhesomwhat wrot orseyde;

And dide also his othrè ôbservaunces
That til a lover length in this cas;
And, after-that his deestornèd on chaunces,
So was he outhur glad or seide 'Allas!'
And held, after his gestès, ay his pas;
And after swiche answerès as he hadde,
So were his dayès sory outhur gladdè. 1351

But to Pandaré alway was his recours;
And pitously gan ay unto him pleyne,
And him bisoughtè reed or som socours;
And Pandarus, that say his wode payne,
Wex wel ny ded for routhè, soth to seyne,
And bisily with al his hertè caste
Som of his wo to sleen, and that as faste;

And seyde, 'Lord, and frend, and brother
dere, 1359

God wot that thy disecè doth me wo!
But, wilt thou stinten of this woful chere,
And by my trouthe, or it be dayès two,
And God to-for, yit shal I shape it so
That thou shalt come into a certein place,
Ther-as thou mayst thy-self preye her of
grace.

'And certainly, I n'ot if thou it wost,
But tho that ben expert in love it seye,
It is oon of the thingès fortherèth most,
A man to have a leiser for to preye, 1369
And siker place his wo for to biwreye;
Foringood herte it mot som routhè impresse
To here and see the gittles in distresse.

'Paraunter thenkestow "Though it be so
That Kindè wolde hir don for to biginne

1341. *Pandarès*, J etc. *Pandarus*.

1344. *he somewhat wrot*, so R S only; J *he
som wrot*; a³ Cx. *somewhat he wrot*; γ⁸ *he wrot
somewhat*.

1347. *his*, γ⁸ *thise*.

1353. *ay unto*, J Cx. S; H₄ G² etc. *ay to*; a³
alwey to; γ⁴ *ay til him to*.

1354. *or*, a³ R Cx.; J omits; γ *and*.

1365. *preye her*, γ *her preye*.

1374. *wolde her don for*, so J H₄ R and Cx.
(omit *her*); others var.

To han a maner routhe upon my wo,
Seith Daunger, Nay, thou shalt me nevere
winne !

So rewleth her her hertés gost withinne,
That, though she bendè, yit she stant on
rote :

What in effect is this unto my bote ?”

‘Think her-ayeins, whan that the sturdy
ook, 1380

On which men hakketh ofè for the nones,
Received hath the happy falling strook,
The gretè sweigh doth it come al at ones,
As don these rokkès or these milnè-stones ;
For swifter cours com’th thing that is of
wightè,

Whan it descendeth, than don thingès
lighte.

‘But reed that boweth down for every blast
Ful lightly, cessè wind, it wol arise ;
But so wil not an ook whan it is cast.—
It nedeth me not longè thee forbise. 1390
Men shal rejoysen of a gret emprise,
Achevèd wel, and stant withouten doute,
Al han men been the lenger ther-aboutè.

‘But, Troilus, now tel me, if thee lest,
A thing which that I shal now axen thee :
Which is thy brother that thou lovest beste,
As in thy verray hertès privètè ?’ 1397
‘Y-wis, my brother Deiphebus,’ quod he.—
Quod Pandarus, ‘Or hourès twyès twelve,
He shal thee ese, unwist of it him-selve.

‘Now lat m’allone, and werken as I may !’
Quod he ; and to Deiphèbus wente he tho,
Which hadde his lord and gretè frend ben
ay ;

Save Troilus no man he lovèd so.
To telle in short, withouten wordès mo,

1376. *Nay*, J omits ; a² *than*.

1383. *doth*, J G² *makith*.

1383. *it*, G γ *it to*.

1383. *come*, a² G Cx. *fallè*.

1387. *But*, so a β ; H₁ *As* ; γ² *And* ; γ² *For*.

1387. *for*, so J P H₄ γ ; H₂ G Cx. H₃ *with* ;
R *fro*.

1390. *longe thee*, γ *thee longe to*.

1394. *now*, so β ; a² S A omit ; γ *yet* (H₁ *that*).

1395. so J ; others var.

1399. *Quod Pandarus*, R Cx. γ² *Now quod*
Pandare.

Quod Pandarus, ‘I preye you that ye be
Frend to a causè which that toucheth me.’

‘Yis, pardè !’ quod Deiphèbus, ‘wel thou
wost,

In al that evere I may, and God to-fore,
Al n’ere it but for man I lovè most, 1410
My brother Troilus. But sey wherfóre
It is ; for sith the day that I was bore
I n’as, ne neverè mo to ben I thinke,
Ayeins a thing that mightè thee-for-thinke.’

Pandaré gan him thanke, and to him seyde,
‘Lo, sire, I have a lady in this toun,
That is my nece, and callèd is Criseyde,
Which some men wolden don oppressioun,
And wrongfully han her possessioun ; 1419
Wherfore I of your lordship you biseche
To ben our frend, withouten morè speche.’

Deiphèbus him answérde, ‘O, is not this
That thou spek’st of to me thus strangèly
Criséyda, my frend !’—He seide, ‘Yis.’
‘Than nedeth,’ quod Deiphèbus, ‘hardily
No more of this, for trusteth wel that I
Wol ben her champioun with spere and
yerde :

I roughtè not though alle her foos it herde.

‘But tel me how—thou wost of this
matère— 1429

It mightè best availen !’—‘Now lat see !’
Quod Pandarus, ‘If ye my lord so dere
Wolden as now do this honour to me
And preyen her to-morwè, lo, that she
Come unto you her pleintès to devise,
Her adversaries wolde of it agrise.

‘And if I morè dorstè preye as now,
And chargen you to han so gret travaile
To han some of your brethren here with
you

1412. *the*, P γ² *that*.

1423. *thus*, H₄ R Cx. Cl. *so*.

1426. *of this*, γ² *to speke*.

1429. *how ihon*, so J H₄ G² Ad. ; a² R Cx. *how*
for thou ; γ *thou that*.

1429. *of*, H₄ R Cx. omit ; γ *al*.

1430. *It*, H₄ omits ; Cx. *I* ; γ² *How I*.

1430. *mightè*, R Cx. *mightè her*.

1433. *And*, so J H₄ G² ; rest *To*.

1436. *preye*, Cx. γ² *preye you*.

That mighten in her causé bet availle, 1439
Than wot I wel she mighté neveré failé
For to ben holpen, what at your instaunce,
What with her othré friendés governaunce.'

Deiphébus, which that comen was of kinde
To alle honour and bounté to consente,
Answerde, 'Itshal bedon! And I can finde
Yit gretter help to this, in myn entente!
What wiltow seyn, if for Eleyne I sente
To speke of this? I trowe it be the beste;
For she may leden Paris as her leste. 1449

'Of Ector, which that is my lord, my brother,
It nedeth nought to preye him frend to be;
For I have herd him, oo time and ek other,
Speke of Criseyde swich honour, that he
May seyn no bet; swich hap to him hath
she,

It nedeth nought his helpés moré crave:
I shal be swich, right as we wol him have.

'Spek thou thy-self also to Troilus
On my bihalve, and prey him with us
dine.'— 1458

'Sire, al this shal be don!' quod Pandarus;
And took his leve, and neveré gan to fine,
But to his neces hous, as streight as line,
He com; and fond her fro the mete arise;
And sette him doun, and spak right in this
wise.—

He seide, 'O verray God, so have I ronne!
Lo, necé myn, see ye not how I swete?
I n'ot whe'r ye the moré thank me conne!
Be ye not war how falsé Poliphete
Is now about eft-sonés for to plete,
And bringe on you advócacyés newe?'—
'I? No!' quod she, and chaunged al
her hewe. 1470

'What? Is he more abouté me to drecche
And dome wrong? What shal I don, allas?

1439. *in*, Cx. omits; γ^b to.

1442. *governance*, a^2 Cx. R *sustenance*.

1447. *for Eleyne I*, so J H₄ Cx. S Ad. Du.;
rest *I for Eleyne*.

1455. *more*, so J G²; H₄ *more to* (a^2 *us more*
help to); γ *for to*.

1466. *whe'r*, P G² *wher*; J *whar*; others
whether.

Yit of him-selven nothing wolde I recche,
N'ere it for Antenor and Eneás,
That ben his friendés in swich maner cas.
But, for the love of God, myn uncle dere,
No fors of that, lat him have al i-fere!

'Withouten that, I have y-nough for us.'—
'Nay,' quod Pandaré, 'it shal no-thing be
so;

For I have ben right now at Deiphebus,
At Ector and mine othré lordés mo, 1481
And shortly makéd ech of hem his fo;
That by my thrift he shal it neveré winne,
For aught he can, whan that so he biginne.'

And, as they casten what was best to done,
Deiphébus, of his owné curtesye,
Com her to preye, in his propré persóné,
To holde him on the morwé companye
At diner, which she n'oldé not denye,
But goodly gan to his preyére obeye. 1490
He thanked her, and wente upon his weye.

Whan this was don, this Pandar up anon,
To telle in short, and forth he gan to wende
To Troilus, as stille as any ston;
And al this thing he tolde him word and
ende,

And how that he Deiphébus gan to blende,
And seide him, 'Now is time, if that thou
conne,
To berethee wel tomorwe, and al is wonne.

'Now spek, now prey, now pitously com-
pleyne!

Let not for nicé shame, or drede, or
slouthé! 1500

Som time a man mot telle his owné peyne!
Bileve it, and she shal han on thee routhe;
Thou shalt be savéd by thy feith in trouthe!
But wel wot I that thou art now in drede,
And what it is I leye I can a-rede!

'Thou thinkest now, "How sholde I don
al this?

1473. *him-selven* (?), all *him-self(e)*; J *him-self*
right; G *himself* *yit*.

1473. *wolde*, Cp. H₁ *ne wolde*.

1482. *makéd*, so J Cp. etc.; others *mad(e)*.

1500. *Let*, a^3 R Cx. *Leve*.

1504. *that*, so J G² S H₃; rest omit.

1504. *in*, H₃ a ; H₂ R Cx. *in a*.

For by my cherés mosten folk espye
That for her love is that I fare amis ; 1508
Yith hadde I levere unwist for sorwèdye."—
Now think not so, for thou dost gret folýe ;
For I right now have founden oo manére
Of sleighté, for to coverén al thy chere.

'Thou shalt gon over night, and that as
blive,

Unto Deiphébus' hous, as thee to pleye,
Thy maladye away the bet to drive,
For-why thou semest sik, soth for to seye.
Sone after that, doun in thy bed thee leye,
And sey thou mayst no lenger up endure,
And ly right there, and byd thyn aventure.

'Sey that thy fevere is wont thee for to
take 1520

The samè time, and lasten til a-morwe ;
And lat see now how wel thou canst it
make,

For, pardé, sik is he that is in sorwe !
Go now, farwel ! and, Venus here to borwe,
I hope, and thou this purpos holdé ferme,
Thy gracé she shal fully ther conferme !'

Quod Troilus, 'Y-wis, thou nedéles
Counseilest me that siklich I me feyne,
For I am sik in earnest doutéles, 1529
So that wel nigh I stervé for the peyne !'
Quod Pandarus, 'Thou shalt the bettré
pleyne,
And hast the lassé nede to contrefete,
For him men demen hot, that men seen
swete !

'Lo, hold thee at thy tristé clos, and I
Shal wel the deer unto thy bowé drive !'
Ther-with he took his leve al softely.
And Troilus to paleis wenté blive,
So glad ne was he nevere in al his live ;
And to Pandarés reed gan al assente, 1539
And to Deiphébus' hous at night he wente.

1507. *cheres*, J *teres*; a³ R Cx. *chere*.
1513. *as blive*, so a³ Cx. S; J etc. *bylyve*;
others *blyve*.
1517. *Sone*, a² Cl. *So*; γ *And*.
1526. *fully ther*, J R *thee fully ther*; G Cx.
thee fully. Cx. *In* and G *Thyn for Thy*.
1532. *nede to*, H₂ H₁ *nede*.
1539. *Pandarés*, so H₄ G D; others *Pandarus*.

What nedeth you to tellen al the chere
That Deiphebus unto his brother made,
Or his accésse, or his sikly manére ;
Ilow men gan him with clothés for to lade
Whan he was leyd ; and how men wolde
him glade ?

But al for nought : he held forthay the wise
That ye han herd Pandaré or this devise.

But certein is, or Troilus him leyde,
Deiphébus had him preyed over night 1549
To ben a frend and helping to Criseyde :
God wot that he it graunted anon right,
To ben her fullé frend with al his might :
But swich a nedé was to preye him thenne,
As for to bidde a wood man for to renne !

The morwen com, and neighengan the time
Of mel-tid, that the fairé Queene Eleyne
Shoop her to ben an houre after the prime
With Deiphebus, to whom shen'oldé feyne;
But as his suster, homly, soth to seyne,
She com to diner in her pleyne entente ;
But God and Pandar wiste al what this
mente. 1561

Com ek Criseyde, al innocent of this,
Antigoné, her suster Tarbe also.—
But flee we now prolixité best is,
For love of God, and lat us fasté go
Right to th' effect, withouten talés mo
Why al this folk assembled in this place ;
And lat us of hir saluingés pace ! 1568

Gret honourdide hem Deiphebus certéyne,
And feddehem wel withal that mightélike ;
But everé-mo 'Allas !' was his refréyne,
'My godé brother Troilus, the sike,
Ia'th yit !' And therewithal he gan to sike,
And after that he peynéd him to glade
Hem as he mighte, and cheré good he made.

1543. *sikly*, J etc. *siklich(e)*.
1549. *had him preyed*, J G² H₃ *hadde (y) preyd*
him.
1550. *a frend*, J G² *good frend*; S₁ *good lord*.
1551. *it*, J G² H₃ omit.
1553. *was*, so a³ γ⁵; J S₁ *was it*; Cx. Ad. Du.
it was; G *was for*; R *was that*.
1557. *Shoop*, γ³ *Shapt(e)*.
1561. *al*, a² R Cx. *non*.
1561. *this*, a² *it*.
1575. *he made*, a² R Cx. G *hem made*.

Compleynéd ek Eleyne of his siknése
So feithfully, that pité was to here ;
And every wight gan waxen for accesse
A leche anon, and seide, ' In this manére
Men curen folk. '— ' This charme I wol
thee lere. ' 1580

But ther sat oon, al list her not to teche,
That thoughté, ' Best coude I yit ben his
leche ! ' 1580

After compleynte, him gonnen they to
preise,
As folk don yit, whan som wight hath
bigonne

To preise a man, and up with pris him reise
A thousand fold yit hyér than the sonne :
' He is, he can, that fewé lordés conne ! ' 1591
And Pandarus, of that they wolde afferme,
He nought forgat hir preising to conferme.

Herde alwey this Criseyde wel y-nough,
And every wout gan for to notifie ; 1591
For which withsobré chere her herté lough ;
For who is it that n'olde her glorifye
To mowén swich a knight do live or dye ?
But al passe I, lest ye too longé dwelle,
For for oo fyn is al that evere I telle.

The timé com fro diner for to rise ;
And as hem oughte arisen everychon,
And gonne a while of this and that devise.
But Pandarus brak al this speche anon,
And seidé to Deiphébus, ' Wol ye gon,
If it your willé be, as I you preyde, 1602
To speke here of the nedés of Criseyde ? ' 1602

Eleyne, which that by the hond her held,
Took first the tale, and seidé, ' Go we blive ! ' 1602
And goodly on Criseyde she biheld,

1577. *that pite, J it pite; Th. that it pte; G² a pte it.*

1585. *up, H₄ 7⁸ omit.*

1587. *he can, J Cx. that can.*

1590. *alwey this, Cx. at this; 7⁸ at this thing.*

1591. *for, J Cx. D Cl. omit.*

1593. *it that, so J G only; R Du. Dg. that that; H₂ he that; rest that.*

1593. *n'olde, 7 ne wolde.*

1594. *do, J a² to.*

1596. *For for, so B 7; a² For; J H₄ G² But for.*

1598. *arisen, a² Cx. they risen.*

1602. *If it, Cx. 7⁸ If.*

And seidé, ' Jovés, lat him neveré thrive
That doth you harm, and bring him sone
of live !

And yevc me sorwé, but he shal it rewe
If that I may, and allé folk be trewe ! ' 1610

' Tel thou thy neces cas, ' quod Deiphebus
To Pandarus, ' for thou canst best it telle. '—
' My lordés and my ladies, it stant thus :
What sholde I lenger, ' quod he, ' do you
dwelle ? '—

He rong hem out a proces lik a belle
Upon her so, that highté Poliphete,
So héynous, that men mighte on it spete.

Answeerde of this ech wers of hem than other,
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien,
' An-hongéd be swich oon, were he my
brother, 1620

And so he shal, for it ne may not varien ! ' 1620
What sholde I lenger in this talé tarien ?
Pleinlich, at onés, allé they her highten
To ben her frend in al that evere they
mighten.

Spak than Eleyne and seidé, ' Pandarus,
Wot ought my lord my brother this matére,
I mene Ector ? Or wot it Troilus ? ' 1629
He seidé, ' Ye ! But wol ye now me here ?
Me thinketh this, sith Troilus is here, 1629
It weré good, if that ye wolde assente,
She tolde her-self him al this, or she wente.

' For he wol have the more her grief at herte
By causé, lo, that she a lady is,
And, by your leve, I wol but in right sterte
And do you wite, and that anon y-wis,
If that he slepe, or wile ought here of this. ' 1638
And in he lep, and seide him in his ere,
' God have thy soule ! Y-brought have
I thy bere ! ' 1638

1616. *Upon, J H₄ G² R Unto.*

1619. *gonnen, a³ R Cx. gan.*

1621. *it, a³ Cl. he.*

1623. *at ones alle, so a³ only; rest al(le) at ones.*

1624. *frend, so B; a² S frendes; 7⁸ help(e).*

1629. *this, sith, so R Cx. H₁ etc.; a² sith that; J Cp. Cl. etc. this, sith that.*

1630. *good, R right good.*

1634. *in right, so J G R etc.; H₄ Cx. in; a² Cl. etc. right in.*

1637. *lep, 7 lepte.*

To smilen gan of this tho Troilus,
And Pandarus withouten rekēninge 1640
Out wente anon t' Eleyne and Deiphebus,
And seide hem, 'So ther be no tarynge
Ne morē prees, he wol wel that ye bringe
Criseyde anon, my lady, that is here,
And as he may endure he wol her here.

'But wel ye wot the chaumbrē n'is but
lite,
And fewē folk may lightly make it warm.
Now loketh ye, for I wol han no wite
To bringe in prees that mightē don him
harm
Or him disesen, for my bettrē arm !— 1650
Whē'r it be bet sh' abidē til est-sones :
Now loketh ye that knowēn what to done
is.

'I seye for me, best is, as I can knowe,
That no wight in ne wendē but ye tweye,
But it were I ; for I can in a throwe
Reherse her cas, unlik that she can seye ;
And after this she may him onēs preye
To ben good lord in short, and take her
leve ; 1658
This may not muchel of his ese him reve.

'And ek, for she is straunge, he wol forbere
His esē, which that him thar not for you ;
Ek other thing, that toucheth not to here,
He wol you telle—I wot it wel—right
now,
That secret is and for the tounē prow.
And they, that knowen no-thing of his
entente,
Withouten more to Troilus in wente.

1639. *gan of this*, so H₄ Cx. S ; others *of this gan*.

1644. *anon*, so R Cx. ; rest omit (γ *Criseyda*).
1645. *her here*, so R ; H₂ Cx. *you here* ; rest *here* (γ etc. *enduren*).

1646. *n'is*, J nys ; rest *is*.

1651. *abide*, so J H₄ G² Cx. ; others *bide*.

1654. *ye*, J *we*.

1662. *to here*=to her.

1663. *you*, so a² J etc. ; H₄ R G it ; γ⁵ *me*.

1665. *knowen no-thing*, so J H₄ G² ; *knewe no-thing*, R S ; Ad. Du. *nothing knowe* ; *nothing knewe*, a² Cx. γ⁶.

1665. *his*, γ *this*.

1666. *wente*, so H₄ Cx. R ; rest *they wente* (C *sche wente*).

Eleyne in al her goodly softē wise
Gan him salue, and wommanly to pleye,
And seide, 'Y-wis, ye mote algate arise !
Now, fairē brother, be al hool, I preye !'
And gan her arm right over his shulder
leye ; 1671
And him with al her wit to réconforte,
As she best coudē, she gan him desporte.

So after this quod she, 'We you biseke,
My derē brother Deiphebus and I,
For love of God—and so doth Pandar
eke—

To ben good lord and frend right hertely
Unto Criseyde, which that certeinly 1678
Receiveth wrong, as wot wel here Pandaré,
That can her cas wel bet than I declare.'

This Pandarus gan newe his tonge affile,
And al her cas reherse, and that anon.
Whan it was seid, sone after in a while,
Quod Troilus, 'As sone as I may gon,
I wol right fayn with al my might ben
oon,
Have God my trouthe, her causē to
sustene.'

'Now good thrift have ye !' quod Eleyne
the Queene.

Quod Pandarus, 'And it your willē be,
That she may take her leve or that she
go.'

'O, ellēs God forbedē,' tho quod he, 1690
'If that she vouchē-sauf for to do so !'
And with that word quod Troilus, 'Ye two,
Deiphēbus and my suster, leef and dere,
To you have I to speke of oo matēre,

'To ben avisēd of your reed the bettre';
And fond as hap was at his beddēs heed

1669. *algate*, γ⁸ *alweyes*.

1673. *him*, γ *him to*.

1674. *So*, Cx. *Some*.

1687. *Now*, so S only. (See l. 847.)

1687. *Eleyne*, J *Helena* ; H₄ *Helena* ; R *Heleyne tho*.

1688. *And*, J G² S Yif.

1690. *O*, a² G ; H₂ etc. *Or* ; H₄ *Romit* ; Cx. *Now*.

1690. *tho*, a³ Cx. etc. *it tho*.

1691. *she*, J R ye ; G² *thou*.

1693. *leef*, H₂ *leve*.

The copy of a tretis and a lettre
That Ector hadde him sent, to axen reed
If swich a man was worthy to ben deed,
Wot I not who : but in a grislich wise
He preyed hem anon on it avise. 1701

Deiphébus gan this lettré to unfolde
In earnest gret; so dide Eleyne the Queene;
And roming outward, faste it gan biholde,
Dounward a steire, and in an herber grene
This ilke thing they reddén hem bitwene;
And largely the mountaunce of an houre
They gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now lat hem rede, and torné we anon
To Pandarus, that gan ful fasté pryce 1710
That al was wel; and out he gan to gon
Into the greté chaumbre, and that in hye,
And seidé, 'God save al this companye!
Com, necé myn, my lady Queene Eleyne
Abideth you, and ek my lordés tweyne.

'Ris, tak with you your nece Antigone
Or whom you list,—or no fors, hardily:
The lassé pres, the bet.—Com forth with
me;

And loké that ye thonken humbly 1719
Hem allé thre; and whan ye may goodly
Your timé sec, taketh of hem your leve,
Lest we too longe his restés him bireve.'

Al innocent of Pandarus' entente,
Quod tho Criseyde, 'Go we, uncle dere!
And arm inarm inward with himshe wente,
Aviséd wel her wordés and her chere;
And Pandarus in earnestful manére 1727
Seide, 'Allé folk, for Goddés love I preye,
Stinteth right here, and softly you pleye.

'Aviséth you what folk ben here withinne,
And in what plit oon is, God him amende!'

1699. *was, J war; H₄ G were.*
1701. *anon on, Cx. bothe anon on; S bothe on; J G² faste on.*

1705. *and in, so J H₄ G² R; Cx. and into; rest into.*

1707. *mountaunce, J etc. mountenaunce.*

1715. *lordes, H₄ R ladies (!).*

1729. *you, J H₄ G Cx. ye.*

And inward, thus: 'Ful softly biginne,
Nece, I conjure; and heylly you defende,
On His half which that soule us allé sende,
And in the vertu of corounés tweyne,
Sle not this man, that hath for you this
peyne!

'Fy on the devil! Think which oon he is,
And in what plit he li'th! Com off anon!
Thenk al swich taried tidé, lost it is!
That wol ye bothé seyn whan ye ben oon!
Secoundely ther yit devineth non 1741
Upon you two: com off now, if ye conne!
Whil folk is blent, lo, al the time is wonne!

'In titeringe, in púrsuit, and delayes,
The folk devine at wagging of a stre;
That, though ye wolde han, after, merie
dayes,
Than dar ye nought; and why? For
she and she
Spak swicha word: thus lookéd he and he!
Lest time I loste, I dar nought with you
dele: 1749
Com off therfore, and bringeth him to hele!'

But now to you, ye lovers that ben here,
Was Troilus not in a cankerdort,
That lay, and mighté whispring of hem
here,
And thoughte, "O Lord, right now
renneth my sort,
Fully to deye, or han anon confort!"
And was the firsté time he sholde her
preye
Of love: Omighty God, what shal he seye?

1733. *Nece, J H₄ G O nece.*

1734. *half which that, so Cx. S etc.; R H₃ behalf that; J H₄ etc. half that.*

1735. *in the, J H₄ etc. in.*

1739. *tide, lost it is, so a² and Cx. (omit it); J and others tid(e), but lost it (n)is.*

1741. *Secoundely, H₄ Cx. (And) sikerly.*

1744. *in, so a³ Cx.; R and in; J G γ and.*

1746. *That, γ And.*

1749. *Lest, so H₂ H₅ R; J etc. Las.*

1752. *cankerdort, so a³ Cx.; J etc. cankedort.*

1756. *And, H₄ And it.*

1757. *O, a² J A.*

BOOK III

O BLISFUL light, of which the bemésclere
Adorneth al the thriddé hevené faire !
O sonnès lief, O Jovés daughter dere,
Plesaunce of love, O goodly debonaire,
In gentil hertes ay redy to reparaire !
O verray cause of hele and of gladnesse,
Y-heried be thy might and thy goodness !

In hevene and helle, in erthe and salté see
Is felt thy might ; if that I wel discerne,
As man, brid, best, fissh, herbe, and grené
tree 10

Thee fele in timés with vapour eterne,
God loveth, and to lovè wol not werne ;
And in this world no livés créature,
Withouten love, is worth, or may endure.

Ye Jovés first to th'ilke effectés glade,
Thorough whiche that thingés liven alle
and be,

Commooveden, and amorous him made
On mortal thing ; and as you list ay ye
Yeve him in love ese or adversité, 19
And in a thousand formés down him sente
For love in erthe, and whom you list he
hente.

Ye fiersé Mars apaisen. of his ire,
And as you list ye maken hertés digne ;
Algatés, hem that ye wol sette a-fire,
They dreden shame, and vices they resigne ;
Ye don hem curteis ben, fresshe and
benigne ;

And heighe or lowe, after a wight en-
tendeth,

The joyés that he hath your might him
sendeth.

Ye holden regne and hous in unité ;
Ye sothfast cause of frendship ben also ;
Ye knowe al th'ilké coveréd qualité 31

1. R omits ll. 1-49. This apostrophe to Venus,
as planet and goddess of love, is adapted by
Chaucer from a speech of Troilus in *Filostrato*.

5. ay ; a³ Cx. H₃ omit.

17. him (?) (Boc.), all hem.

28. him, H₂ Cx. hym ; H₄ omits ; Ph. hyt ;
rest it.

Of thingés which that folk on wondren
so,

Whan they can not construe how it may jo
She loveth him, or why he loveth here,
As why this fissh, and not that, com'th to
were.

Ye folk a lawe han set in univere •
And this knowe I by hem that lovers be,
That who-so striveth with you hath the
wers.

Now, lady bright, for thy benignité,
At reverence of hem that serven thee, 40
Whos clerk I am, so techeth me devise
Some joye of that is felt in thy servise.

Ye in my naked herté sentément
In-hielde, and do me shewe of thy swet-
nesse !—

Caliopé, thy vois be now présent,
For now is nede ! Sestow not my destresse,
How I mot telle anon-right the gladnesse
Of Troilus, to Venus herynge ?
To which gladnésse, who nede hath, God
him bringe !

—Lay al this mené whilè Troilus 50
Recording his lessoun in this manère :
'Ma fey !' thoughte he, 'thus wol I seye
and thus ;

Thus wol I pleyne unto my lady dere ;
That word is good, and this shal be my
chere ;

This n'il I not foryeten in no wise.'
God leve him werken as he can devise !

And, Lord, so that his herté gan to quappe,
Hering her come, and shorté for to sike !
And Pandarus, that ledde her by the
lappe,

Com neer, and gan in at the curtein pike,
And seide, 'God do bote on allé sike ! 61
See who is here you comen to visite !
Lo, here is she that is your deth to wite !'

49. gladnésse, y⁸ omits.

53, 54. J H₃ invert ; R omits l. 53.

58. shorte, J R Cx. sor(e).

Therwith it semed as he wepte almost.
 'Ha a!' quod Troilus so reufully,
 'Whe'r me be wo, O mighty God, thou
 wost!

Who is al there? I see nought trewely.
 'Sir,' quod Criseyde, 'it is Pandaré and I.'
 'Ye, sweté herte? Allas, I may not rise
 To knele and do you honour in som wise.'

And dresséd him upwárd; and she right
 tho 71

Gan bothe her handéssofte upon him leye:
 'O, for the love of God, do ye not so
 To me!' quod she, 'ey! what is this to
 seye?

Sir, comen am I to you for causes tweye,—
 First, you to thanke, and of your lordship
 eke

Continuance I woldé you biseke.'

This Troilus, that herde his lady preye
 Of lordship him, wex neither quik ne ded,
 Ne mighte a word for shamé to it seye, 80
 Although men sholdé smiten off his hed;
 But, Lord, so he wex sodeinliché red,
 And sire, his lesson that he wendé konne
 To preycn her was thorugh his wity-ronne.

Criseyde al this aspi'dé wel y-nough,
 For she was wis, and lovede him nevere the
 lasse,

Al n'ere he malapert, or made it tough,
 Or was too bold to singe a fool a masse.
 But whan his shamégan somewhat to passe,
 His wordés, as I may my rimés holde, 90
 I wol you telle, as techen bokés olde.

In chaungéd vois right for his verray drede,
 Which vois ek quook, and therto his manére
 Goodly abayst, and now his hewés rede,
 Now pale, unto Criseyde, his lady dere,
 With look down-cast and humblé yolden
 chere,—

66. *O mighty*, J Ph. R *almighty*.

80. *to it*, J R Cx. *to hir*.

83. *wende*; a² Cx. *wend had*.

84. *was*, y⁸ *is*.

84. *wit*; a² Cx. *herte*.

90. *wordes*, so a³ J Cx. S; G² R *werkes*; y⁸ *resons*.

91. *wol you*, Cp. H₁ Cl. *you wol*.

Lo, th' alderfirsté word that him asterte'
 Was, twyès, 'Mercy, mercy, sweté herte!'

And stinte a while; and, whan he mighte
 out-bringe, 99

The nexté word was, 'God wot, for I have,
 As ferforthliche as I have had konninge,
 Ben yourés al, God so my soulé save,
 And shal til that I, woful wight, be grave!
 And though I dar ne can unto you pleyne,
 Y-wis I suffré not the lassé peyne.

'Thus muche as now, O wommanliché wif,
 I may out-bringe; and if this you displese,
 That shal I wreke upon myn owné lif
 Right sone I trow, and do your herte an
 esc,

If with my deth your wreththe I may
 apese. 110

For, sithen ye han herd me somewhat seye,
 Now recche I nevere howsoné that I deye.'

Therwith his manly sorwé to biholde
 It mighte have maad an herte of stoon to
 rewé;

And Pandar wep as he to water wolde,
 And pokéd evere his necé newe and newe,
 And scidé, 'Wo bigon ben hertés trewe!
 For love of God, mak of this thing an
 ende,

Or slee us bothe at-onés or ye wende!'

'Ey! what?' quod she, 'by God and by
 my trouthe 120

I n'ot not what ye wilné that I seye.'—

'“Ey! what?”' quod he, 'that ye han
 on him routhé,

For Goddés love; and doth him not to
 deye.'—

'Now thanné thus,' quod she, 'I wolde
 him preye

To tellé me the fyn of his entente;

Yit wiste I neveré wel what that he
 mente.'

101. *ferforthliche*, so a β S; y⁸ *faithfully*.

104. *I*; a³ R Cx. H₃ *I ne*.

110. *wreththe*, H₃ Cx. S y⁸ *herte*. *I*, all
 except a² G² S omit.

111. *For*, y⁷ *But*.

119. *or ye*, H₄ y⁷ *er (or) that ye*; H₂ J Cx. *or*
we.

'What that I mene, O swetè hertè dere?'
 Quod Troilus. 'O goodly fresshé free!
 That with the stremes of your yën clere
 Ye wolden frendly somtime on me see; 130
 And thanne agreën that I may ben he,
 Withouten braunche of vice in any wise,
 In trouthe alwey to don you my servise

'As to my lady right and chief resort,
 With al my wit and al my diligence;
 And I to han, right as you list, confórt,
 Under your yerde, egal to myn offence;
 As deth, if that I breké your defence;
 And that youdeigné me so muche honoúre,
 Me to comanden aught in any houre; 140

'And I to ben your verray humblè trewe,
 Secret, and in my peynés pacient,
 And everè mo desiren fresshly newe
 To serve and ben y-like diligent,
 And with good herte al hoolly your talent
 Receiven wel, how sorè that me smerte,—
 Lo, this mene I, myn ownè swetè herte.'

Quod Pandarus, 'Lo, here an hard
 requeste,
 And resonable a lady for to werne!
 Now, necè myn, by natal Jovès feste, 150
 Were I a god, ye shulden sterve as yerne,
 That heren wel this man wol no thing
 yerne
 But your honoúr, and sen him almost
 sterve,
 And ben so loth to suffren him you serve!'

With that she gan her yën on him caste
 Ful esily and ful debónerly,
 Avising her, and hiede her not too faste
 With nevere a word, but seide him
 sobrelly,

'Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewely,
 And in swich forme as he gan now devise,
 Receiven him fully to my servise, 161

130. *frendly somtime*, H₄ γ⁸ *somtime frendly*.

136. *I*, γ⁸ omits.

139. *you*, so a³ J G R S; rest *ye*.

144. *y-like*, so a³ Cx. H₃; J and others *ay y-like*.

157. *hiede her*, so a³ Cx.; others omit *her*.

158. *sobrelly*, γ⁸ *softely*

160. *And*, J *But*.

100. *he*; J and others *ye*.

'Biseching him, for Goddès love, that he
 Wolde, in honoúr of trouthe and gentillesse,
 As I wel mene, ek menè wel to me,
 And myn honoúr with wit and bisnesse
 Ay kepe; and if I may don him glad-
 nesse
 From hennésforth, ywis I n'il not feyne.—
 Now beth al hool, no lenger that ye pleyne.

'But nathêles this warne I you,' quod she,
 'A kingès sone although ye be y-wis, 170
 Ye shal no more have sovèreyneté
 Of me in love than right in that cas is;
 N' I n'il forbere, if that ye don amis,
 To wraththè you, and, whil that ye me
 serve,
 Cherice you right after ye deserve.

'And shortly, derè herte and al my knight,
 Beth glad, and draweth you to lustinesse;
 And I shal trewely with al my might
 Your bittrè tornen al into swetnèsse;
 If I be she that may do you gladnèsse, 180
 For every wo ye shal recovere a blisse.'—
 And him inarmès took, and gan him kisse.

Fil Pandarus on knees, and up his yën
 To hevenè threw, and held his hondès
 hye:

'Inmortal God,' quod he, 'that mayst not
 dyen,

Cupide I mene, of this mayst glorifye;
 And Venus, thou mayst maken melodye;
 Withouten hond, me semeth that in toune
 For this mirácle I here ech bellè sounè!

'But ho! no more as now of this matère,
 For-why this folk wol comen up anon 191
 That have the lettrè red: lo! I hem here.
 But I conjuré thee Criseyde, and—oon
 And two—thee Troilus, whan thou mayst
 gon,

That at myn hous ye ben at my warninge,
 For I ful wel shal shapè your cominge;

'And eseth ther your hertès right y-nough;
 And lat sec which of you shal bere the belle

168. *lenger that ye*, a³ R Cx.; J G γ *lenger ye ne*.

188. *in*, γ⁸ *in the*.

189. *mirácle*, γ⁸ *merveille*.

To speke of love !'—and right therwith
 he lough,— 199
 'For ther have ye a leiser for to telle.'—
 Quod Troilus, 'How longé shal I dwelle
 Or this be don ?' Quod he, 'Whan thou
 mayst rise,
 This thing shal be right as I thee devise.'

With that, Eleyne and also Deiphebus
 Tho comen upwârd right at the stairés
 ende ;

And Lord, so tho gan gronen Troilus,
 His brother and his suster for to blende.
 Quod Pandarus, 'It time is that we wende :
 Tak, necé myn, your leve at allé three,
 And lat hem speke, and cometh forth
 with me.' 210

She took her leve at hem ful thriftily
 As she wel coude ; and they her reverence
 Unto the fullé didn hardily,
 And speken wonder wel in her absence
 Of her, in preising of her excellence,
 Hergovernaunce, her wit ; and her manére
 Commendedén, it joyé was to here.

Now lat her wende unto her owné place,
 And torné we to Troilus ayein,
 That gan ful lightly of the lettré pace 220
 That Deiphebus had in the gardin seyn ;
 And of Eleyne and him he woldé feyn
 Delivered ben, and seidé that him leste
 To slepe, and after-talés to han reste.

Eleyne him kiste and took her levé blive ;
 Deiphébus ek ; and hom wente every
 wight ;
 And Pandarus, as faste as he may drive,
 To Troilus tho com, as liné right ;
 And on a paillet al that gladdé night
 By Troilus he lay, with blisful chere, 230
 To tale ; and wel was hem they were i-fere.

Whan every wight was voided but they two,
 And alle the dorés weren faste y-shette—

199. and right, J H₅ γ a-right.
 203. I thee, so R ; a² Cx. I ; H₄ thei ; J G
 thou wilt ; H₅ I woll ; γ I you.
 205. right at ; a² Cx. H₃ at.
 206. tho, H₅ H₃ γ than(ne).
 230. blisful, H₃ γ merie.

To telle in short withouté wordés mo—
 This Pandarus withouten any lette
 Up-roos, and on his beddés side him sette,
 And gan to speken in a sobré wise
 To Troilus, as I shal you devise : 238

'Myn alderlevest lord and brother dere,
 God wot, and thou, that it sat me so sore
 When I thee saw so languissing to-yere
 For love, of which thywo wex alwey more ;
 That I with al my might and al my lore
 Have everé sithen don my businesse
 To bringé thee to joye out of distresse,

'And have it brought to swich plit as thou
 wost,
 So that thorough me thou stondest now
 in weye

To faren wel : I seye it for no best,
 And wostow why ? For, shame it is to seye,
 For thee have I bigonne a gamé pleye 250
 Which that I neveré don shal eft for other,
 Although he were a thousand fold my
 brother ;

'That is to seyn, for thee am I becomen,
 Betwixen game and earnest, swich a mene
 As maken wommen unto men to comen :
 Thou wost thy-selven what I woldé mene.
 For thee have I my nece, of vices clene,
 So fully maad thy gentilessé triste, 258
 That al shal ben right as thy-selven liste.

'But God that al wot take I to witnésse,
 That nevere I this for covetisé wroughte,
 But only for t' abreggè that distresse
 For which wel nigh thou deydest, as me
 thoughte.

But, goodé brother, do now as thee oughte
 For Goddés love, and keeper out of blame ;
 Sith thou art wis, so save alwey her name.

'For wel thou wost the namé yit of here
 Among the peple, as who seith, halwed is ;
 For neveré was ther wight, I dar wel swere,

256. So a β ; γ *Alseye I nought, thou wost wel
 what I mene.*

266. so save, J G² so kepe ; γ and save.

267. yet, γ as yet.

269. So J H₄ G² S Cx. ; a² R γ *For that man
 is unborne.*

That everè wistè that she dide amis. 270
But wo is me, that I, that cause al this,
May thenken that she is my necè dere,
And I her em and trattor ek i-fere!

'And were it wist that I thorough myn engýn
Had in my nece y-put this fantasye
Tò don thy lust and hoolly to ben thyn,
Why, al the peplè wolde upon it crye
And seyn that I the worstè trecherye
Dide in this cas that everè was bigonne,
And she fordon, and thou right naught
y-wonne! 280

'Wherfor, or I wol further gon a pas,
Thee preye ich eft, although thou
shuldest deye,
That priveté go with us in this cas:
That is to seye, that thou us neverè wreye;
And be not wroth though I thee oftè preye
To holden secré swich an heigh matére,
For skilful is, thou wost wel, my prayére.

'And thenk what wo ther hath betid or this
For making of avauntès, as men rede,
And what mischaunce in this world yit
ther is, 290
Fro day to day, right for that wikked dede;
For-which these wisè clerkès that ben dede
Han everè thus provérbéd to us yonge,
"The firstè vertu is to kepè tonge."

'And n'ere it that I wilne as now abregge
Defusioun of speche, I coude almost
A thousand oldè stories thee alcgge
Of wommen lost thorough fals and folis bost.
Provérbès canst thyselfe y-nowe and wost,
Ayeins that vicè, for to ben a labbe 300
Though men soth seide as often as they
gabbe.

273. *trattor* (?), H₁ *tractor*; J and others *traitour*, *tretour*, etc. (Boc. *trattator*).

277. *peple wolde upon it*, so a² J R Cx.; *γ* *worid upon it wolde*.

280. *fordon*, so a β; H₄ *forlorn*; G *γ* *forlost*.

282. So a β; G *γ* *Yct eft I thee biseche and fully seye*.

293. J H₄ R Cx. *Han write or this, as men jii teche us yonge*.

294. *The*, so a² R Cx.; *That the*, H₄ H₅ H₃; rest *That*.

301. *Though men soth seide*, so a β; *γ* *Alseyde men soth*.

'Oo tonge, allas, so often her-beforn
Hath maad ful many a lady bright of hewe
Seyn "weylawey the day that I was born!"
And many a maydès sorwè for to newe;
And for the morè part al is untrewé
That men of-yelpe, and it were brought
to preve:

Of kindè non avauntour is to leve.

'Avauntour and a lier, al is on; 309
As thus: I pose a womman graunteth me
Her love, and seith that other wol she non,
And I am sworn to holden it secré,
And after I go telle it two or three;
Y-wis, I am avauntour at the leste,
And lier, for I breké my behesté.

'Now lokè than if they ben aught to blame!
Such maner folk,—what shal I clepe
hem, what?—

That hem avaunte of wommen, and by
name,

That neverè yit behighte hem this ne
that,

Ne knewe hem morè than myn oldè hat!
No wonder is, so god me sendè hele, 321
Though wommen dreden with us men to
dele!

'I seye not this for no mistrust of you,
Ne for no wis-man, but for folès nice,
And for the harm that in the world is now
As wel for folý ofte as for malíce;
For wel wot I in wisè folk that vice
No womman drat, if she be wel avised;
For wisè ben by folès harm chastised.

'But now to purpos. Levè brother dere,
Have al this thing that I have seid in
minde, 331
And kep thee clos, and be now of good
chere,

For at thy day thou shalt me trewè finde.
I shal thy proces sette in swich a kinde,
And God to-forn, that it shal thee suffise,
For it shal ben right as thou wolt devise.

302. *Oo*, H₄ Cx. *For* (oo probably means *one*).

303. *Hath maad ful*, so a β; G *γ* *Hastow maad* (omit *ful*).

304. *Seyn*, so R Cx. H₅ S₂ Dg.; rest *Seyd(e)*.

'For wel I wot thou menest wel, pardé;
Therefore I dar this fully undertake.
Thou wost ek what thy lady graunted thee,
And day is set the chartres up to make.
Have now good night, I may no lenger
wake; 341
And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse,
That God me sende deth or soné lisse!'

Who mighte tellen half the joye or feste
Which that the soule of Troilus tho felte,
Hering th'effect of Pandarus' behest?
His oldé wo that made his herté swelte
Gan tho for joyé wasten and to-melte;
And al the richesse of his sikés sore 349
At-onés fledde, he felte of hem no more.

But right so as thise holtés and thise hayis,
That han in winter dedé ben and dreye,
Revesten hem in grené whan that May is,
Whan every lusty listeth best to pleye,
Right in that selvé wisé, soth to seye,
Wex sodcinly his herté ful of joye,
That gladder wasther neveré man in Troye.

And gan his look on Pandarus up-caste
Ful sobrelly and frendly for to see,
And seide, 'Frend, in Aperil the laste, 360
As wel thou wost, if it remembre thee,
How neigh the deth for wo thou founde
me,
And how thou didest al thy bisnesse
To knowe of me the cause of my distresse.

'Thou wost how longe ich it forbar to seye
To thee, that art the man that I best triste;
And peril non was it to thee biwreye,
That wiste I wel: but tel me, if thee liste,
Sith I so loth was that thy-self it wiste,
How dorste I no tellen of this matére, 370
That quaké now, and no wight may us
here?

'But nathéles by that God I thee swere
That as him list may al this world governe,
And if I lye, Achilles with his spere

354. *listeth*, so a β; γ *liketh*.

355. *to*, R Cx. γ *for to*.

359. *for to*, a^b H₃ Cx. *on(un) to*.

371. *wight*, J R Cx. *man*.

Myn herté cleve, al were my lif eterne
As I am mortal, if I late or yerne
Wolde it biwreye, or dorste, or sholde
konne,
For al the good that God made under
sonne; 378

'That rather dye I wolde, and détermine,
As thinketh me, now stokked in prisoun,
In wrecchednesse, in filthe, and in vermíne,
Captif to cruel King Agáménoun:
And this in alle the temples of this toun
Upon the Goddés alle I wol thee swere
To-morwé day, if that it lik'th thee here.

'And that thou hast so muche y-don for me
That I ne may it neveré mo deserve,
This knowe I wel, al mighte I now for
thee
A thousand times on a morwé sterve. 389
I can no more, but that I wol thee serve
Right as thy slavé, whider so thou wende,
For everé-more unto my livés ende!

'But here with al myn herte I thee biseche
That nevere in me thou demé swich folýe
As I shalseyn: me thoughté by thy speche
That this which thou me dost for com-
panye,
I sholdé wene it were a bauderye.
I am not wood, al if I lewéd be!
It is not oon, that wot I wel, pardé! 399

'But he that go'th for gold or for richésse
On swich messagé, calle him as thee list;
And this that thou dost, calle it gentillesse,
Compassioun, and felawship, and trist.
Departe it so, for widé-wher is wist
How that ther is diversité requered
Bitwixen thingés like, as I have lered.

'And that thou knowe I thenké not ne
wene
That this servise a shamé be or jape,
I have my fairé suster Polixene, 409
Cassandre, Eleyne, or any of the frape:
Al be she nevere so faire or wel y-shape,

379. *That*, H₁ R Cx. S *But*.

399. *oon*, so J a² C²; rest *so*.

411. *At*, so R; rest omit.

Tellē me which thou wilt of everychone
To han for thyn, and lat me thanne allone !

‘ But sith thou hast y-don me this servise
My lif to save, and for non hope of mede,
So, for the love of God, this grete emprise
Parforme it out, for now is mostē nede ;
For heigh and lowe, withouten any drede,
I wol alwey thine hestēs allē kepe :
Have now good night, and lat us bothē
slepe.’ 420

Thus held him ech of other wel apayed,
That al the world ne mighte it betamende ;
And on the morwē, whan they were arayed,
Ech to his ownē nedēs gan entende.
But Troilus, though as the fir he brende
For sharp desir of hope and of plesāunce,
He not forgot his wisē governaunce,

But in himself with manhod gan restreyne
Ech rakel dede and ech unbridled chere,
That allē tho that livē, soth to seyne, 430
Ne sholde han wist by word or by manēre
What that he mente, as touching this
matēre :

From every wight as fer as is the cloude
He was, so wel dissimulen he coude.

And al this whilē that I you devise,
This was his lif : with al his fullē might
By day he was in Martēs heigh servise,
This is to seyn, in armēs as a knight ;
And for the morē part the longē night 439
He lay and thoughtē how he mightē serve
His lady best, her thank for to deserve.

I n’il not seyn that, though he lay ful softe,
That in his thought he n’as somewhat
disessed,

Ne that he tornēd on his pilwes ofte,
And wolde of that he missēd han ben esed ;
But in swich casmen ben not alwey plesed,

412. *me* ; γ omits.

427. *wise*, so α β ; γ *gode*.

433. *From every wight*, α^2 G^2 *From ech in that*.

435. *this*, γ *the*.

439. *more*, α^2 G^2 R Cx . *moste*.

442. So J H_4 R S ; α^2 G^2 γ *N’il I not swere
although*.

442. *ful*, so H_4 R ; rest omit.

445. *esed*, α^2 R γ *sesed*.

For aught I wot, no morē than was he :
That can I deme of possibilitē.

But certein is, to purpos for to go, 449
This menē while, as writen is in geste,
He saw his lady som-time ; and also
She with him spak whan that she durste
and leste ;
And by hir bothe avis, as was the beste,
Apointeden ful warly in this nede
In every thing how they wolden procede.

But it was spoken in so short a wise,
In swich await alwey, and in swich fere,
Lest any wight devinen or devise
Wolde on this thing, or to it leye an ere,
That al this world so lief to hem ne were
As Cupido wolde hem a spacē sende 461
To maken of hir speche aright an ende.

But th’ilkē litel that they spake or wroughte
His wisē gost took ay of al swich hede,
It semēd her he wistē what she thoughte
Withouten word, so that it was no nede
To bidde him aught to don, or aught
forlede :

For which her thoughte that love, al
come it late,
Of allē joye had opned her the yate.

And, shortly of this proces for to pace, 470
So wel his werk and wordēs he bisette,
That he so ful stood in his lady grace
That twenty thousand timēs or she lette
She thoughtē God she everē with him
mette,

So coude he him gōvērne in swich servise
That al the world ne mighte it bet devise.

For-why she fond him so discret in al,
So secret, and of swich obēsaunce,
That wel she felte he was to her a wal

450. *This mene while* ; α^2 G^2 γ *That in this
while*.

452. *and*, J and others *or*.

455. *In every thing*, so J H_4 R ; α^2 G^2 γ *So
as they dorste*.

459. *on this thing*, so J H_4 R S ; α^2 G^2 *in this
speche* ; γ of *hem two*.

461. *As*, so J H_4 R ; α^2 G^2 γ *As that*.

461. *space*, so J α^2 G^2 H_4 ; R γ *grace*.

468. *her*, so J H_4 R ; α^2 G^2 γ *she*.

Of steel, and sheld from every displeaunce,
That to ben in his godé governaunce, 481
So wis he was, she was no more afered,—
I mene, as fer as oughte ben requered.

And Pandarus, to quike alwey this fir,
Was evere y-liké prest and diligent;
To ese his frend was set al his desir;
He shof ay on; he to and fro was sent;
He lettres bar whan Troilus was absént;
That neverè wight as in his frendes nede
Ne bar him bet to don his frend to spede.

But now paraunter som man waiten wolde
That every word or look, or sonde or chere
Of Troilus that I rehersen sholde 493
In al this while unto his lady dere:
I trowe it were a long thing for to here,
Orof what wight that stant in swich disjoint
His wordés alle or every look to-point!

For-sothe I have not herd it don or this
In storie non, ne no man here I wene!
And though I wolde, I couldè not y-wis;
For ther was some epistel hem bitwene
That wolde, as seith myn auctour, wel
contene 502
An hondred vers, of which him list not
write;
How sholde I than a line of it endite?

But to the grete effect. Than seye I thus,
That—standing in concord and in quiéte
Thise ilkè two, Criseyde and Troilus,
As I have seid, and in this timè swete,
Save only oftè mightè they not mete,
Ne leiser han hir spechè to fulfelle,— 510
That it bifel right as I shal you telle,

That Pandar, which that alwey dide his
might
Right for the fin that I shal speke of here,
As for to bringen to his hous som night
His fairè nece and Troilus i-fere,
Wher-as at leiser al this heighe matére

484. *this*, so J H₄ R; a² G² γ *the*.
490. *to don his frend to spede*, so J H₄ R Cx.;
others *than he withouten drede*.
503. *An hondred vers*, so J H₄ R Cx.; others
Nigh half this book.
508. *seid*, so J H₄ R Cx.; others *told*.

Touching hir love were at the fulle up-
bounde,
Had, as him thoughte, a timè to it founde.

For he with gret deliberacioun 519
Had every thing that ther-to mighte availle
Forcast and put in execucioun,
And neither left for cost ne for travaile.
Come if hem list, hem sholdè no thing
faile;

And for to ben in aught aspyèd there,
That wiste he wel an impossiblè were.

And dredèles it cler was in the wind
Of every pye, of every lettè-game.
Thus al is wel; for al this world is blind
In this matère, bothè wilde and tame!
This timber is al redy up to frame: 530
Us lakketh naught, but that we witen wolde
A certein houre in which she comen sholde!

And Troilus, that al this púrveyaunce
Knew at the fulle and waited on it ay,
Had her-upon ek maad his ordinaunce,
And founde his cause and ther-to al th'aray,
That if that he were misséd night or day
Ther-whil he was aboutè this servise,
That he was gon to don his sacrificse,

And moste at swich a temple allonè wake,
Answéréd of Apollo for to be, 541
And first to sen the holy laurer quake
Or that Apollo spake out of the tree
To telle him whan the Grekes sholden
flee,—

And for-thy lette him no man, God forbede,
But preye Apollo that he wolde him spede!

Now is ther litel morè for to done;
But Pandar up, and (shortly for to seyne)

518. *as him thoughte*, so J H₄ R Cx. S; others
out of doute.

526. *And*, so Cx. S H₃; rest omit.

529. *wilde*, so J H₄ R Cx. S H₃; a² G² γ
fremde.

535. *his*, S H₃ γ *gret*.

537. *That if that*, γ *If that*.

543. *Apollo*, a² G² *the god (aught)*.

544. *whan the Grekes*, a² G² γ *nex: whan
Grekes (var.)*.

546. *that he wolde him spede*, so J H₄ R Cx.;
others *helpen in this nede*.

Right sone upon the chaunging of the mone
 Whan lightles is the world a night or
 tweyne, 550
 And that the welken shop him for to reyne,
 He streight a-morwe unto his necé wente :
 Ye han wel herd the fin of his entente.

Whan he was come, he gan anon to pleye
 As he was wont, and at him-self to jape ;
 And finaliche he swor and gan her seye
 By this and that, she sholde him not escape,
 Ne make him lenger after her to gape,
 But certainly she mosté by her leve 559
 Come soupen in his hous with him at eve.

At which she lough, and gan her faste
 excusen,
 And seide, 'It raineth : lo, how sholde
 I gon ?' ---
 'Lat be,' quod he, 'ne stond not thus to
 musen :

This mot be don : ye shal be ther anon !'
 So at the laste her-of they fille at oon,
 Or ellés, softé he swor her in her ere,
 He woldé neveré comén ther she were.

And she a-gamé gan him for to rounce,
 And axéd him if Troilus were there. 569
 He swor her, 'nay, for he was out of tounce,'
 And seidé, 'Nece, I posé that he were,
 Thee thurfté neveré han the moré fere ;
 For, rather than mensholde him ther aspye,
 Me weré levere a thousand fold to dye.'

Not list myn auctour fully to declare
 What that she thoughté whan he seidé so,
 That Troilus was out of tounce y-fare,
 As if he seidé soth ther-of or no ;
 But that she graunted with him for to go
 Withouté await, sin he her that bisoughte,
 And as his nece obeyéd as her oughte.

But nathéles yit gan she him biseche, 582
 Although with him to gon it was no fere,
 For to be war of goosisshe peples speche

568. *And she a-game (?)*, J R Cx. *And she againe* (H₄ on game); a² G² γ *Some after this she* (var.) See ll. 636, 648.

579, 580. So J H₄ R Cx. S; a² G² γ
 But that withouté await with him to go
 She graunted him . . .

That dremen thingés whiche that neveré
 were,
 And wel avise him whom he broughté there,
 And seide him, 'Em, sin I moste on
 you triste,
 Loke al be wel, for I do as you liste.'

He swor her this, bystokkés and bystones,
 And by the Goddés that in hevené dwelle,
 Or ellés were him leveré, fel and bones, 591
 With Pluto King as depé ben in helle
 As Tantalus !—What sholde I longé telle ?
 Whanal was wel, he roos and took his leve ;
 And she to soper com, whan it was eve,

With ek a certein of her owné men,
 And with her fairé nece Antigoné
 And other of her women nine or ten.
 But who was glad now ? Who, astrowén ye,
 But Troilus, that stood and mighte it see 600
 Thorough-out a litel window in a stewe
 Ther he bi-shet til midnight was in mewe,

Unwist of every wight but of Pandaré ?
 But now to purpos. Whan that she was
 come

With allé joye and allé frendés fare,
 Her em anon in armés hath her nome,
 And after to the soper, alle and some,
 When timé was, ful softé they hem sette :
 God wot, ther was no deynté for to fette !

And after soper gonne they to rise 610
 At esé wel with hertés fresshe and glade ;
 And wel was him that couldé best devise
 To liken her, or that her laughen made.
 He song : she pleyde : he toldé tale of
 Wade.

But at the laste, as every thing hath ende,
 She took her leve, and nedés woldé wende.

588. *for I do*, so J H₄ R Cx ; G² γ and (a² I)
do now.

589. *this*, so J R G² : Cx. *tho* ; a² H₄ D om. ;
 γ *yis*.

596. *With ek (?)*, all *With*.

598. a² G² *And (of) her women wel (a) nine*
or ten.

599. *was*, a² G² *is*.

602. *til*, H₄ *ful* ; others, *sin*.

604. *now to purpos*, so J H₄ R Cx. S ; a² G² γ
to the point now.

614. *tale of Wade* ; see C. T. E. 1424.

But O Fortúne, executrice of wierdes !
 O Influences of this hevenès hye !
 Soth is, that under God ye ben our hierdes,
 Though to us beestès ben the causes wrye !
 This mene I now, for she gan homward
 hye ; 621

But execut was al biside her leve
 The Goddès wil ; for which she mostè bleve.

The bentè monè with her hornès pale,
 Saturn, and Jove, in Cancro joinèd were,
 That swich a reyn from hevenè gan avale
 That every maner womman that was there
 Had of that smoky reyn a verray fere ;
 At which Pandàre tho lough, and seidè
 thenne, 629
 ‘ Now were it time a lady to gon henne !

‘ But, godè nece, if I mighte everè plesè
 You any thing, than preyè ich you,’ quod he,
 ‘ To don myn herte as now so gret an ese
 As for to dwelle hereal this night with me ;
 For, necè, this’ your ownè hous, pardè !
 Now by my trouthe I seye it not a-game :
 To wende as now, to me it were a shame.’

Criseyde, which that coude as muchè good
 As half a world, took hede of his preyère ;
 And sin it ron and al was on a flood, 640
 She thoughte, ‘ as good chep may I dwellen
 here,

And graunte it gladly with a frendès chere
 And have a thank, as grucche and than
 abide,
 For hom to gon, it may not wel bi-tide.’

‘ I wol,’ quod she, ‘ myn unclief and dere ;
 Sin that you list, it skile is to be so ;
 I am right glad with you to dwellen here ;
 I seidè but a-game, I woldè go.’ — 648
 ‘ Y-wis, graunt mercy, necè !’ quod he tho ;
 ‘ Were it a-game or no, soth for to telle,
 Now am I glad, sin that you list to dwelle.’

Thus al is wel. But tho began aright
 The newè joye and al the feste agayn ;

623. *The*, γ^b *At the*.

635. *For, nece, this (is)*, so J H₄ R Cx. S ; a²

G² γ *For why this is*.

636. *Now*, H₃ *And* ; γ^7 *For*.

But Pandarus, if goodly had he might,
 He wolde han hyèd her to beddè fayn ;
 And seidè, ‘ Lord, this is a hugè rayn !
 This were a wedder for to slepen inne !
 And that I rede us sonè to beginne ! 658

‘ And, necè, wot ye wher I shal you leye ?
 For-that we shal not liggè fer asonder,
 And for ye neither shullen, dar I seye,
 Herè no noise of reynès nor of thonder,
 By God, right in my litè closet yonder ;
 And I wol in that outè hous allone
 Ben wardein of your wommen everychone.

‘ And in this middel chaumbrè that ye see
 Shul alle your wommen slepen wel and
 softe,
 And al withinnè shal your-selven be ;
 And if ye liggè wel to-night come ofte,
 And careth not what wedder is a-lofte ! 670
 The wynanon ; and whan so that you leste,
 Than is it timè for to gon to reste.’

Ther n’is no morè ; but her-after sone,
 The voidè dronke, and travers drawe anon,
 Gan every wight that haddè naught to done
 More in the place out of the chaumbrè gon.
 And alwey in this menè while it ron,
 And blew ther-with so wonderlichè loudè,
 That wel nigh no man herén other coude.

Tho Pandarus, her em, right as him oughte,
 With wommen swiche as were her most
 aboute, 681

I ful glad unto her beddèsside her broughte,
 And took his leve, and gan ful lowè loute,
 And seide her, ‘ At this closet dore withoute,
 Right overthwart, your wommen liggè
 alle,
 That whom you list of hem ye may her calle.’

So whan that she was in the closet leyd,
 And alle her wommen forth by ordinaunce

662. *Here no (?)*, all *Here(n)*.

667. *alle*, so H₅ S Cx. ; rest omit. (Read ?
Shullen ; see l. 661.)

668. *al withinne*, so J H₄ R Cx. S ; a² γ *ther*
I scyde ; G² *ther besyden*.

672. So J H₄ R Cx. S H₃ (var.) ; a² G² γ^7 *So*
go we slepe, I trouwe it be the beste (var.)

677. So J H₄ R Cx. S ; a² G² γ^8 *And evere mo*
so sterneliche it ron.

A-beddē werēn ther-as I have seyde, 689
 Ther was no more to skippen ne to traunce,
 But boden gon to beddē, with mischaunce,
 If any man was stering any-where,
 And lat hem slepen that a-beddē were.

But Pandarus, that wel coude ech a del
 Theoldē daunce, and every point ther-inne,
 Whan that he saw that allē thing was wel,
 He thoughte he wolde upon his werk
 beginne,

And gan the stewē dore al softe unpinne;
 And stille as stoon, withouten lenger lette,
 By Troilus adoun right he him sette. 700

And, shortly to the point right for to gon,
 Of al this thing he tolde him word and
 ende,

And seide, 'Mak thee redy right anon,
 For thou shalt into hevenē blissē wende!'
 'Now, seintē Venus, thou megracē sende,'
 Quod Troilus, 'for neverē yit no nede
 Hadde ich or now, ne halvendel the drede!'

Quod Pandarus, 'Ne dred thee nevere a del,
 For it shal ben right as thou wolt desire:
 So thrive I, this night shal I make it wel,
 Or casten al the gruel in the fire!'
 'Yit, blisful Venus, this night thou m'
 enspire,'

Quod Troilus, 'as wis as I thee serve,
 And everē bet and bet shal til I sterve.

'And if ich hadde, O Venus ful of mirthe,
 Aspētēs badde of Mars or of Saturne,
 Or thou combust or let were in my birthe,
 Thy fader prey al th'ilkē harm disturne
 Of grace, and that I glad ayein may turne,
 For love of him thou lovedest in the shawe,
 Imene Adón, that with the boor was slawe.

'O Jove ek, for the love of faire Európe
 The whiche in forme of bole awei thou fette,
 Now help! O Mars, thou with thy bloddy
 cope,
 For love of Cipris thou me naught ne lette!

692. *man*, so J H₄ Cx. a² G²; R S γ⁸ wight.

696. *saw*, a² G² wiste.

725. *Cipris*, Venus; see v. 208.

O Phebus, thenk whan Dane her-selven
 shette

Under the larke, and laurer wex for drede;
 Yit for her love, O help now at this nede!

'Mercúrie, for the love of Hiersē eke, 729
 For which Pallás was with Aglauros wroth,
 Now help! And ek Diane, I thee biseke
 That this viágē be not to thee loth!
 O fatal sustren, whiche, or any cloth
 Me shapen was, my destinē me sponne,
 So helpeth to this werk that is begonne!'

Quod Pandarus, 'Thou wrecched mouses
 herte!

Art thou agast so that she wol thee bite?
 Why, don this furrē cloke upon thy sherte,
 And folwē me, for I wol han the wite! 739
 But bid, and lat me gon biforn a lite.'—
 And with that word he gan undo a trappe,
 And Troilus he broughte in by the lappe.

The sternē wind so loudē gan to route
 That no wight other noisē mightē here;
 And they that layēn at the dore withoute
 Ful sikerly they sleptē alle i-ferē;
 And Pandarus, with a ful sobré chere,
 Go'th to the dore anon withouten lette
 Ther-as they laye, and softēliche it shette.

And, as he com ayeinward privēly, 750
 Iiis nece awook, and askēd, 'Who go'th
 there?'—

'My derē neccē,' quod he, 'it am I!
 Ne wondreth not, ne have of it no fere.'—
 And ner he com, and seyde her in her ere,
 'No word, for love of God, I you biseche!
 Lat no wight rise and herēn of our
 speche!'

'What! which way be ye comēn, ben-
 distē?'

Quod she, 'and how thus unwist of hem
 alle?'—

726. *Dane*, Daphne; see C.T. 2062-2064.

729. *Hiersē*, Herse, daughter of Cecrops, be-
 loved by Mercury.

730. *Aglauros*, Herse's sister; see Ovid, *Met*
 ii. 708-832.

733. *fatal sustren*, the three Fates.

757. *bendistē*, so J; others *benedictē*.

758. *thus*, R γ⁸ omit.

'Here at this lite trappè-dore,' quod he.—
Quod tho Criseyde, 'Lat me som wight
calle!'—⁷⁶⁰

'Ey! God forbedè that it sholdè falle,'
Quod Pandarus, 'that ye swich foly
wroughte!

They mightè demen that they nevere er
thoughte!

'It n'is not good a sleping hound to wake,
Ne yeve a wight a causè to devine:
Your wommen slepen alle, I undertake,
So that for hem the hous men mightè mine,
And slepen wollen til the sonnè shine!
And whan my tale y-brought is to an ende,
Unwist, right as I com, so wol I wende. ⁷⁷⁰

'Now, necè myn, ye shal wel understonde,'
Quod he, 'so as ye wommen demen alle,
That for to holden longe a man in honde
And him her lief and derè hertè calle,
And maken him an howe above a calle,
I mene, as love another in this while,—
She doth herself a shame and him a gile.

'Now, wher-by that I tellè you al this:
Ye wot your-self as wel as any wight
How that your love al fully graunted is ⁷⁸⁰
To Troilus, the worthiest knight
Oon of this world, and therto trouthe
y-plaint,
That, but it were on him along, ye n'olde
Him neverè falsen whil ye livèn sholde.

'Nowstant it thus: that sin I fro you wente,
This Troilus, right platly for to seyn,
Is thourgh a goter by a privé wente
Into my chaumbrè come in al this reyn,
Unwist of every maner wight, certeyn,
Save of myself, as wisly have I joye, ⁷⁹⁰
And by that feith I shal Priàm of Troye!

'And he is come in swich peyne and distresse
That, but he be al fully wood by this,
He sodeinly mot falle into woodnèsse
But-if God helpe. And causè why this is,—
He seith him told is of a frend of his,

^{773.} holden longe, so J H₄ R Cx. H₃; others
holde in love.

How that ye sholden love oon, hatte
Horaste,
For sorwe of which this night shal ben
his laste!'

Criseyde, which that al this wonder herde,
Gan therewithal aboute her hertè colde, ⁸⁰⁰
And with a sik she sodeinly answérde,
'Allas, I wen'dè, who-so talès tolde,
My derè hertè woldè me not holde
So lightly fals! Allas, conceitès wronge,
What harm they don, for now live I too
longe!

'Horaste! allas, and falsen Troilus!
I knowe him not, God help me so!'
quod she.

'Allas, what wikked spirit tolde him thus?
Now certès, em, to-morwe, and I him see,
I shal of that as ful excusen me ⁸¹⁰
As everè didè womman, if him like.'
And with that word she gan ful sorè sike.

'O God!' quod she, 'so worldly selinesse,
Which clerkès callen fals felicitè,
Y-medled is with many a bitternesse!
Ful anguissous than is, God wot,' quod
she,

'Condicioun of veyn prosperité!
For either joyès comen not i-fere,
Or ellès no wight hath hem alwey here.

'O brotel wele! O worldly joye un-
stable! ⁸²⁰

With what wight so thou be or how thou
pleye,

Either he wot that thou, joye, art muàble,
Or wot it not; it mot be oon of tweye.
Now, if he wot it not, how may he seye
That he hath verray joye and selinesse,
That is of ignoraunce ay in derknèsse?

'Now, if he wot that joye is transitorie,
As every joye of worldly thing mot flee,

^{797.} oon, G y oon that.

^{800.} therewithal, a² G² y sodeinly.

^{801.} sodeinly, a² G² y sorwfully.

^{810.} of that, S y therof.

^{813-836.} Adapted from *Boethius* ii. prosa 4.

^{820.} O worldly, so J H₄ R Cx; a² G² y of
mannes.

Than every time he that hath in memorie,
The drede of lesing maketh him that he 830
May in no parfit seliness be ;
And if to lese his joye he set a mite,
Than semeth it that joye is worth ful lite.

'Wherfor I wol define in this manere,
That trewely, for aught I can espye,
Ther is no verray wele in this world here.
But O thou wikked serpent jalousye !
Thou misbelevèd envious folye !
Why hastow Troilus maad to me untriste,
That neverè yit agilte him that I
wiste ?'— 840

Quod Pandarus, 'Thus fallen is this cas - '
'Why ! uncle myn,' quod she, 'who tolde
him this ?
Why doth my derè hertè thus, allas ?'
'Ye wot, ye necè myn,' quod he, 'what is.
I hope al shal be wel that is amis,
For ye may quenche al this if that you leste.
And doth right so : I holde it for the
beste.'—

'So shal I don to-morwe, y-wis,' quod she,
'And God to-forn, so that it shal suffice.'—
'To-morwe ? allas, that were a fair !'
quod he. 850

'Nay, nay, it may not stonden in this wise ;
For, necè myn, thus writen clerkès wise,
That peril is with dreeching in y-drawe :
Nay, such abodès ben not worth a hawe !

'Necce, allè thing hath time, I dar avowe ;
For whan a chaumbre a-fire is, or an halle,
Wel more nede is, it sodeinly rescowe
Than to dispute and axe amongès alle
"How is this candel in the straw y-falle ?"
A ! bendisté ! for al among this fare 860
The harm is don, and far-wel feldèfare !

'And, necè myn, ne take it not a-grief :
If that ye suffre him al night in this wo,
God help me so, ye had him neverè lief !
That dar I seyn, now ther is but we two.
But wel I wot that ye wol not do so ;

Ye ben too wis to don so gret folye
To putte his lif al night in jupartye.'—

'Had ich him neverè lief ? By God, I wene
Ye haddè neverè thing so lief !' quod
she. — 870

'Now, by my thrift,' quod he, 'that shal
be sene !

For, sin ye maken this ensauple of me,
If ich al night wolde him in sorwè see
For al the tresour in the town of Troye,
I biddè God I neverè mote have joye !

'Now, lokè than, if ye that ben his love
Shal putte his lif al night in jupartye
For thing of naught, now by that God above
Not only this delay com'th of folye
But of malice, if that I shal not lye ! 880
What ! platly, and ye suffre him in distresse,
Ye neither wisdom don ne gentillesse !'

Quod tho Criseyde, 'Wol ye don oo thing,
And ye therwith shal stinten his disese :
Have here and bereth him this blewè ring,
Forther is no thing mighte him bettre plesse
Save I my-self, ne more his herte apese ;
And seye my derè hertè, that his sorwe
Iscausèles : that shal hiescento-morwe !'

'A ring ?' quod he, 'ye, haselwodès
shaken ! 890

Ye, necè myn, that ring moste have a ston
That mightè dedè men a-livè maken ;
And swich a ring trowe I that ye have non !
Discrecioun out of your hed is gon :
That fele I now,' quod he, 'and that is
routhe.

O time y-lost ! wel maystow corsen
slouthe !

'Wot ye not wel that noble and heigh coràge
Ne sorweth not ne stinteth ek for lite ?
But, if a fool were in a jalous rage,
I n'oldè setten at his sorwe a mite, 900
But feffe him with a fewè wordès white
Another day whan that I mighte him finde !
But this thing stant al in another kinde.

838. *envious*, J γ^4 and *envious*.
862. *ne*, a^2 G 2 J omit.

882. *wisdom*, a^2 G 2 γ *bounte*.
889. *causeles*, a^2 G 2 *nedeles*.
889. *he seen*, a^2 G 2 γ *he sene* (*seyn*).

'This is so gentil and so tendre of herte
That with the deth he wol his sorwes wreke;
For, trusteth wel, how soré that him
smerte,

He wol to you no jalous wordès speke.
And for-thy, nece, or ye his hertè breke,
So speke yourself to him of this matère;
For with oo word ye may his hertè stere. ⁹¹⁰

'Now have I told what peril he is inne;
And his cominge unwist is t' every wight;
And, pardé, harm may ther be non ne
sinne;

I wol my-self ben with you al this night.
Ye knowe ek how it is your owné knight,
And that by right ye moste upon him triste,
And I al prest to fecche him whan you
liste.'

This accident so pitous was to here,
And ek so lik a soth at primé face,
And Troilus her knight to her so dere, ⁹²⁰
His privé coming, and the siker place,
That, though that she dide him as tho a
grace,

Consideréd allé thing's as they stode,
No wonder is, sin she dide al for gode.

Criseyde answerde, 'As wisly God at reste
My soule bringe, as me is for him wo!
Andem, y-wis, fayn wolde I don the beste,
If that ich haddé gracé to do so.
But whether that ye dwelle or for him go,
I am, til God me bettre mindé sende, ⁹³⁰
At Dulcarnon, right at my wittés ende.'—

Quod Pandarus, 'Ye, neccé, wol ye here?
Dulcarnon calléd is "fleemingé of
wrecches":

It semeth hard, for wrecches wol not lere
For verray slouthé and othré wilful
tecches:

This' seid by hem that ben not worth
two fecches!

^{913.} *And, y Ne*

^{931.} *Dulcarnon* (from Arab. two-horned),
applied to Euclid i. 47. Here in the general sense
of difficulty or perplexity.

^{933.} *fleemingé of wrecches*; a translation of
Fuga miserorum, or *Eleufuga*, applied to Euclid
i. 5, which Pandarus, perhaps purposely confuses
with the 47th proposition.

But ye ben wis; and this matère on
honde
N'is neither hard, ne skilful to with-
stonde.'

'Than, em,' quod she, 'doth her-of as
you list!

But, or he come, I wol up first arise. ⁹⁴⁰
And, for the love of God, sin al my trist
Is on you two, and ye ben bothé wise,
So werketh now in so discreet a wise
That ich honoúr may have, and he ples-
saunce,

For I am here as in your governaunce.'

'That is wel seid,' quod he, 'my neccé
dere;

Ther good thrift on that wisé gentil herté!
But liggeth stille and taketh him right
here;

It nedeth not no ferther for him sterte.
And ech of you ese othressorwes smerte ⁹⁵⁰
For love of God! And, Venus, I thee
herie,

For some hope I weshul ben allé merie!'

This Troilus ful sone on knees him sette
Ful sobrély, right by her beddés hed,
And in his besté wise his lady gette.
But, Lord, so she wex sodeinliché red!
Ne, though men sholden smiten off her
hed,

She coude not a word a-right out-bringe
So sodeinly, for his sodein cominge!

But Pandarus, that so wel coude fele ⁹⁶⁰
In every thing, to pleye anon bigan,
And seidé, 'Nece, see how this lord can
knele

Now for your trouthe! Y-see this gentil
man!'

And with that word he for a quissshin ran,
And seidé, 'Kneleth now whil that you
leste!

Ther God your hertés bringé sone at
reste!'

Can I not seyn, for she bad him not rise,
If sorwe it putte out of her rémembraunce,

^{937.} *this matère*, a² G² y *that we han*.

Or ellës that she took it in the wise
Of duëtë as for his ôbservaunce ; 970
But wel wot I she dide him this plesãunce,
That she him kiste, although she sightë
scre,

And bad him sitte a-doun withouten more.

Quod Pandarus, ' Now wolye wel biginne!
Now doth him sittë, godë necë dere,
Upon your beddës side al ther withinne,
That ech of you the bet may other
here !'—

And with that word he drow him to the fere,
And took a light, and fond his conte-
naunce

As for to loke upon an old romaunce. 980

Criseyde, that was Troilus' lady right
And cleer stood on a ground of sikernesce,
Al thoughtë she her servaunt and her
knight

Ne sholde of right non untrouthe in her
gesse,

Yet nathëles, considerëd his distresse
And that love is in cause of swich folýe,
Thus to him spak she of his jalousýe :

' Lo, hertë myn, as woldë th' excellence
Of love, ayeins the whichë no man may
Neoughteek goodly maken résistënce, 990
And ek because I feltë wel and say
Your gretë trouthe and servise every day,
And that your herte al myn was, soth to
seyne,

This drof me for to rewe upon your peyne.

' And your goodnësse have I founde alwey
yit,

Of which, my derë herte and al my knight,
I thonke it you as fer as I have wit,
Al can I not as muche as it were right ;
And I emforth my conning and my might
Have, and ay shal how sorë that me
smerte, 1000

Ben to you trewe and hool with al myn
herte ;

971. *wot*, so J H₄ R ; Cx. *rede* ; others *finde*.

972. *sightë*, so J ; others *siked*.

979. *fond*, H₅ Cx. *feynede*.

989. *whiche*, so H₄ R Cx. a² G² ; J *γ* *whiche* *that*.

' And dredëles that shal befounde at preve !
But, hertë myn, what al this is to seyne
Shal wel be told, so that ye not you greve,
Though I to you right on your-self com-
pleyne ;

For ther-with mene I finally the peyne
That halt your herte and myn in hevinessce
Fully to slen, and every wrong redresse.

' My godë myn, n'ot I for-why ne how
That jalousýe, allas, that wikked wivere,
So causëles is copen into you, 1011
The harm of which I woldë fayn deliver.
Allas, that he, al hool, or of him slivere,
Sholde han his refut in so digne a place !
Ther Jove him sone out of your herte arace !

' But O thou Jove, O auctour of natüre !
Is this an honour to thy deité,
That folk ungiltif suffren here injüre,
And who that giltif is, al quit go'th he ?
O were it levcful for to pleyne on thee, 1020
That undeservëd suffrest jalousýe,
Of that I wolde upon thee pleyne and crye !

' Ek al my wo is this, that folk now usen
To seyn right thus, " Ye, jalousye is love,"
And wolde a bussshel venim al excusen
For-that oo greyn of love is in it shove !
But that wot heighë God that sit above,
If it be liker love, or hate and grame !
And after that it oughtë bere his name !

' But certein is, som maner jalousye 1030
Is excusablë more than som, y-wis ;
As whan cause is, and som swich fantasye
With pietë so wel repressëd is
That it unnethë doth or seith amis,
But goodly drinketh up al his distresse :
And that excuse I for the gentillesse.

' And som so ful of furie is and despit
That it surmounteth his repressioun.
But, hertë myn, ye ben not in that plit,

1011. *So*, so J H₄ R Cx ; others *Thus*.

1024. *Ye*, J and others *that*.

1026. *in*, *γ* *on*.

1028. *and grame*, so J H₄ ; others *or*.

1033. *pietë*, so J S Cp. H₁ only ; rest *pite*,
pete, etc.

That thanke I God; for-which your
passioun 1040

I wol not calle it but illusioun
Of hábundaunce of love and bisy cure,
That doth your hertè this disece endure;

‘Of which I am right sory, but not wroth.
But, for my devoir and your hertès reste,
Whe’r so you list by ordal, or by oth,
By sort, or in what wisè so you leste,
For love of God, lat preve it for the beste!
And if that I be giltif, do me deye!
Allas, what mighte I morè don or seye?’—

With that a fewè brightè terès newe 1051
Out of her yèn fille, and thus she seyde,
‘Now God, thou wost in thought ne dede
untrewe

To Troilus was neverè yit Criseyde!’—
With that her hed down in the bed she
leyde,

And with the shete it wreigh, and sightè
sore,

And held her pees: not oo word spak she
more.

But now help God to quenchen al this sorwe!
So hope I that he shal, for he best may!
For I have seyn of a ful misty morwe
Folwen ful ofte a merie somer’s day; 1061
And after winter folweth grenè May.
Men sen alday, and reden ek in stories,
That after sharpe shourès ben victoriès.

This Troilus whan he her wordès herde,
(Have ye no care!) him listè not to slepe;
For it thoughte him no strokès of a yerde
To here or sen Criseyde his lady wepe,
But wel he felte aboute his hertè crepe,
For every tere which that Criseyde asterte,
The crampe of deth, to streyne him by
the herte, 1071

And in his minde he gan the time acorse
That evere he com ther, or that he was born;
For now is wikkè turned into worse,

1073. *evere*, so H₃ only.

1073. *or, y and.*

1073. *that*, Cp. *that that*.

1073. *was*, H₅ *man was*.

And al the labour he hath don biforn
He wen’de it lost: he thoughte he n’as
but lorn.

‘O Pandarus,’ thoughte he, ‘allas, thy wile
Serveth of naught, so weylawey the
while!’—

And therwithal he heng adoun the hed,
And fil on knees, and sorwfulliche he
sightè: 1080

What mighte he seyn? He felte he n’as
but ded;

For wroth was she that sholde his sorwès
lighte.

But nathèles, whan that he speken mighte,
Than seide he thus, ‘God wot that of
this game,

Whan al is wist, than am I not to blame!’—

Therwith the sorwè so his hertè shette
That from his yèn fil ther not a tere;
And every spirit his vigour in-knette,
So they astonèd and oppressèd were; 1089
The feling of his sorwe, or of his fere,
Or of aught ellès, fled was out of towne;
And down he fil al sodeinliche a-swowne.

This was no litel sorwè for to see;
But al was hust, for Pandar up as faste,
‘O necè, pes, or we be lost!’ quod he,
‘Beth not agast!’ But certein, at the laste,
For this or that, he into bedde him caste,
And seide, ‘O thef, is this a mannèsherte?’
And off he rente al to his barè sherte.

And seidè, ‘Necè, but ye helpe us now,
Allas, your ownè Troilus is lorn!’ 1101
‘Y-wis, so wolde I, and I wistè how,
Ful fayn!’ quod she: ‘Allas, that I
was born!’—

‘Ye, necè, wole ye pullèn out the thorn
That stiketh in his hertè,’ quod Pandaré,
‘Sey “al foryeve,” and stint is al this
fare!’—

‘Ye, that to me,’ quod she, ‘ful leverè were
Than al the good the sonne aboutè go’th!’
And therwithal she swor him in his ere,

1094. *But*, J Cx. a² and others *For*.

1094. *for*, so H₄ G; Cx. a² *but*; J y *and*.

'Y-wis, my deré herte, I am not wroth,
Have here my trouthe!' and many
another oth; 1111

'Nowspek to me, for it am I, Criseyde!'—
But al for naught: yit mighte he not
abreyde.

Therwith hispous and paumés of his hondes
They gan to frote, and wete his temples
tweyne;

And, to deliverén him fro bittré bondes,
She ofte him kiste; and, shortly for to
seyne, 1117

Him to revoken she dide al her peyne.
And at the laste, he gan his breth to drawe,
And of his swough sone after that adawe,

And gan bet minde and reson to him take;
But wonder sore he was abayst, y-wis,
And with a sik, when he gan bet awake,
He seide, 'O mercy, God, what thing is
this?'—

'Why do ye with your-selven thus amis?'
Quod tho Criseyde, 'Is this a mannés game?'
'What, Troilus! wol ye do thus? For
shame!'—

And therwithal her arm over him she leyde,
And al foryaf, and ofté time him keste.
He thonked her, and to herspak and seyde
As fil to purpos for his hertés reste; 1131
And she to that answérde him as her leste,
And with her goodly wordés him disporte
She gan, and ofte his sorwes to confôrte.

Quod Pandarus, 'For aught I can espyen,
I nor this candel serven here of nought;
Light is not good for siké folkés yén!
But for the love of God, sin ye be brought
In thus good plit, lat now non hevye thought
Ben hanging in the hertés of you tweye!'—
And bar his candel to the chiméneye. 1141

Sone after this, though it no nedé were,
Whan she swiche othés as her list devise

1115. *wete*, J H₄ R H₃ *ek*.

1127. *a² G² Wol Troilus do thus? Allas, for shame!*

1136. *I nor this candel*, *a² G² γ This light nor I (var.)*

1141. *his*, γ *the*.

Had of him take, her thoughté tho no fere,
Ne cause ek non to bidde him thennés rise.
Yit lassé thing than othés may suffice
In many a cas; for every wight, I gesse,
That loveth wel, meneth but gentillesse!

But in effect she woldé wite anon 1149
Of what man, and ek wher, and also why
He jalous was, sin ther was causé non;
And ek the signé that he took it by,
This bad she him to telle her bisily,
Or ellés, certein, she bar him on honde
That this was don for malice, her to fonde.

Withouté moré, shortly for to seyne,
He moste obeye unto his lady heste;
And for the lassé harm he mosté feyne.
He seide her, 'whan she was at swich
a feste, 1159
She mighte on him han lokéd at the leste'—
N'ot I not what, at dere ynough a fissue,
As he that nedés moste a causé fissue!

Criseyde answérdé, 'Swete, al were it so,
What harm was that, sin I non yvel mene?
For, by that God that wroughte us bothé
two,

In allé thing is myn ententé clene!
Swiche arguments ne ben not wortha bene!
Wol ye the childiss jalous contrefete?
Now were it worthy that ye were y-bete!'—

Tho Troilus gan sorwfully to sike; 1170
Lest she be wroth, him thoughte his
herté deyde;

And seide, 'Allas, upon my sorwés sike
Have mercy, sweté herté myn, Criseyde!
And if that in tho wordés that I seyde
Be any wrong, I wol no more trespass;
Do what you list, I am al in your grace!'—

Criseyde answérde, 'Of gilt misericorde!
This is to seyn, that I foryeve al this. 1178
And everé-mo on this night you recorde,
And beth wel war ye do no more amis!'—
'Nay, deré herté myn, quod he, 'y-wis!'—

1148. *wel*, *a² wel and*.

1163. *Criseyde*, *a² G² γ And she*.

1168. *jalous*; J and others *jalousie*.

1177. *Criseyde*, *a² G² γ And she*.

'And now,' quod she, 'that I have don
you smerte,
Foryeve it me, myn ownë swetë herte!'—

This Troilus, with blisse of that supprised,
Putte al in Goddës hond, as he that mente
No thing but wel; and, sodeinly avised,
He her in armës fastë to him hentë.
And Pandarus, with a ful good entente,
Leyde him to slepe, and seyde, 'If ye
ben wise,
'Swowneth not now lest morë folk
arise!'—

1190

What mighte or may the sely larkë seye,
Whan that the sperhawk hath it in his
foot?—

I can no more, but of thise ilkë tweye,
To whom this talë sucër be or soot,
Though that I tarie a yeer, som time I moot
After myn auctour tellen hir gladnësse
As wel as I have told hir hevynesse.

Criseyde, which that felte her thus y-take,
As writen clerkës in hir bokës olde, 1199
Right as an aspen leef she gan to quake,
Whan she him felte her in his armës folde.
And Troilus, al hool of carës coldë,
Gan thanken tho the brightë Goddës
sevenë.—

Thussondry peynës bringen folk in hevene.

This Troilus in armës gan her streyne,
And scide, 'O swete, as everë mote I gon,
Now be ye caught! Now is ther but
we tweyne!

Now yeldeth you, for other bote is non!'—
To that Criseyde answeëd thus anon,
'N' had I or now, my swetë hertë dere,
Ben yolde, y-wis I werë now not here!'—

O, soth is seid, that helëd for to be 1212
As of a fevere, or other gret siknësse,
Men mostë drinke, as men may alday see,
Ful bittrë drinke; and for to hangladnësse,

1202. *And, γ But.*1203. *brighte, γ blissful.*1211. *I were now not here, R Cx. H₃ H₅ I n'*
*had not now ben here.*1214. *alday, a² G² γ oft(n).*

Men drinken oftë peyne and gret distresse:
I mene it here, as for this aventure
That thorough a peyne hath founden al
his cure.

And now swetnëssë semeth morë swete
That bitternesse assayëd was biforn; 1220
For out of wo in blissë now they flete;
Non swich they felten sin they werë born.
Now is this bet than bothë two be lorn!
For love of God, take every womman hede
Towerken thus, whan it com'th to the nede!

Criseyde, alquit from every drede and tene,
As she that justë cause had him to triste,
Made him swich feste, it joyë was to sene,
Whan she his trouthe and clene ententë
wiste; 1229

And as aboute a tree with many a twiste
Bitrent and wryth the swotë wodëbinde,
Gan ech of hem in armës other winde.

And as the newe abaysëd nightingale
That stineth first whan she biginneth singe,
Whan that she hereth any herdë tale,
Or in the hegges any wight steringe,
And after siker doth her vois out-ringe;
Right so Criseyde, whan her dredë stente,
Opned her herte, and tolde al her entente.

And right as he that saw his deth y-shapen,
And deyen mostë, in aught that he may
gesse, 1241

And sodeinly rescous doth him escapen,
And from his deth is brought in sikernes;e;
For al this world, in swich presënt glad-
nësse

Is Troilus, and hath his lady swete.—
With worsë hap God lat us neverë mete!

Her armës smale, her streightë bak and
softe,

Hersidës longë, fleshly, smothe, and white
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful
ofte

Hir snowish throte, her brestes rounde
and lite: 1250

1222. *sin, H₄ and others sin that.*1240. *saw, J seith; a² γ seth.*1241. *mostë, a² G γ mot.*1245. *Is, a² G² γ Was.*

Thus in this hevene he gan him to delite,
And therwithal a thousand time her kiste,
That what to don for joye unnethe he
wiste.

Than seide he thus, 'O Love, O Charité !
Thy moder ek, Citherea the swete,
After thy-self next heriéd be she,
Venus mene I, the wel-willy planéte !
And next you, Iménús, I thee grete !
For neveré man was to you Goddés holde
As I, that ye han brought fro carés colde.

'Benigné Love, thou holy bond of thinges,
Who-so wol grace, and list thee not hon-
ouren, 1267
Lo, his desir wol flec withouten winges !
For n'oldestow of bounté hem socouren
That serven best and most alwéy labouren,
Yit were al lost, that dar I wel scyn, certes,
But-if thy gracé passéd our desertes.

'And, for thou me, that coulde leest deserve
Of hem that noumbred ben unto thy grace,
Hast holpen ther I likly was to sterve, 1270
And me bestowéd in so heigh a place
That th' ilké boundés may no blissé pace,
I can no more, but laude and reverence
Be to thy bounté and thyn excellence !' -

And therwithal Criseyde anon he kiste,
Of which, certein, she felté no disese !
And thus seide he, 'Now woldé God I
wiste,
Myn herté swete, how I you nighté plese !
Whatman,' quod he, 'was everé thus atese
As I on whom the fairest and the beste 1280
That evere I say, deyneth her herté reste ?

'Here may men see that mercy passeth
right :
Th' experience of this is felt in me,
That am unworthy to you, lady bright.
But, herté myn, of your benignété
So thinketh, though that I unworthy be,

1258. *Iménús*, Hymen.1268. *caude leest*, H₅ γ *lest coude*.1282. *this*, a³ G² γ *that*.1284. *to you, lady bright*; a² G² γ *to so sweet
a wight*.

Yit mot I nede amenden in som wise
Right thorough the vertu of your heighe
servise.

'And for the love of God, my lady dere,
Sin God hath wrought me for I shal you
serve, 1290
As thus he wol how that ye ben my stere
To do me live, if that you list, or sterve,
So techeth me how that I may deserve
Your thonk, so that I thorough myn ignor-
aunce
Ne do no thing that be you displeaunce.

'For certés, fressshé wommanliché wif,
This dar I seye, that trouthe and diligence,
That shal ye finden in me al my lif ;
N' I wol not, certein, breken your defence ;
And if I do, présent or in abséncé, 1300
For love of God lat slee me with the dede,
If that it like unto your wommanhede !'

'V-wis,' quod she, 'myn owné hertés list,
My ground of ese, and al myn herté dere,
Gramercy, for on that is al my trist !
But lat us falle away from this matére,
For this suffiseth which that seyde is here ;
And at oo word, withouten répentance,
Welcome, my knight, my pces, my
suffisaunce !' -

Of hir delit or joyés oon the leste 1310
Were impossiblé to my wit to seye ;
But juggeth ye that han ben at the feste
Of swich gladnése, if that hem listé pleye !
I can no more, but thus thise ilké tweye
That night betwixen drede and sikernesse,
They felte in love the greté worthinesse.

O blisful night, of hem so longe y-sought,
How blitheunto hem bothétwo thou were !
Why n'had I swich oon with my soule
y-bought,
Ye, or the leesté joyé that was there ? 1320
Away, thou foulé daunger and thou fere,

1291. *how*, so H₄ H₃ ; J R Cx. omit.1291. a² G² γ read (var.) *As thus I mene, he
wol ye ben my stere*.1307. *this suffiseth which that* ; a² G² γ *it
suffiseth, this that*.

And lat hem in this hevené blissé dwelle,
That is so heigh that no man can it telle !

But how al-though I can not tellen al
As can myn auctour of his excellence,
Yit have I seid, and God to-forn, and shal
In every thing the gret of his sentence ;
And if that I, at lovès reverence,
Have anything in echèd for the beste,
Doth therwithal right as your-selven leste.

For miné wordés, here and every part, 1331
I speke hem alle under correcioun
Of you, that feeling han in lovès art,
And putte hem hool in your discrecioun
T'encesse or maké diminucioun
Of my langáge ; and that I you hiseche.---
But now to purpos of my rather speche.

Thise ilkè two that ben in armès laft,
So loth to hem asonder gon it were,
That ech from other wen'dè ben biraft, 1340
Or ellès, lo, this was hir mostè fere,
Lest al this thing but nicè dremès were :
For-which ful ofte ech of hem seide, ' O
swete,
Clippe ich you thus, or ellès ich it mete ?'

And Lord ! so he gan goodly on her see
That nevere his look ne bleynté from her
face,
And seide, ' O derè hertè, may it be
That this be soth, that ye ben in this
place ?' -
' Ye, hertè myn, God thanke I of his grace !'
Quod tho Criseyde, and therwithal him
kiste, 1350
That wher his spirit was, for joye he n'iste.

This Troilus ful ofte her yén two
Gan for to kisse, and seide, ' O yén clere,
It werè ye that wroughten me this wo,
Ye humblè nettès of my lady dere !

1323. *no man can it*, so J P H₄ R Cx. H₃ S ;
others *al ne can I*.

1324. J R Cx. H₃ S have the two following
stanzas (ll. 1324-1337) after l. 1414 ; H₄ has them
in *both* places.

1324. *But how al-though*, P G γ *But soth is*,
though ; S H₃ (var.)

1327. *the gret of*, P G γ *al hoolly*.

Though ther be mercy writen in your chere,
God wot, the text ful hard is, soth, to finde !
How coude ye withouten bond me
binde ?'---

Therwith he gan her faste in armès take,
And wel a thousand timès gan he sike, 1360
Not swichè sorwful sikès as men make
For wo, or ellès whan that folk ben sike,
But esy sikès, swiche as ben to like,
That shewèd his affeccioun withinne ;
Of swichè sikès coude he nothing blinne.

Sone after this they spake of sondry thinges
As fil to purpos of hir aventure,
And pleyng entrechaungeden hir ringes,
Of which I can not tellen no scriptüre ;
But wel I wot a broche of gold azure,
In which a ruby set was lik an herte, 1371
Criseyde him yaf, and stak it on his sherte.

Lord, trowén ye a coveitousè wrecche,
That blameth love and halt of it despit,
That of the pens that he can mokre and
kekche
Was everè yit y-yeve him swich delit
As is in love in oo point in som plit ?
Nay, doutèles ! for al-so God me save,
So parfit joyè may no nigard have !

They wol seye ' yis,' but, Lord, so that
they lye, 1380
Tho bisy wrecchès, ful of wo and drede !
They clepen love a woodnesse or folyé,
But it shal falle hem as I shal you rede :
They shal forgon the white and ek the
rede,
And live in wo. Ther God yeve hem
mischaunce,
And every lover in his trouthe avaunce !

As woldè God, thise wrecches that despise
Servise of love hadde erès al-so longe
As haddè Mida, ful of coveitise,
And therto dronken hadde as hote and
stronge 1390

1360. *thousand* (Boc.), P G γ *hundred*.
1365. *nothing*, so R ; H₃ A *newere* ; J and
others *not, nought*. H₁ (only) *bilynne* (for *blinne*).
1389. *Mida*, Midas. See C. T. D 951.

As Crassus dide for his affectès wronge,
To techen hem that coveitise is vice,
And love is vertu, though men holde it
nice !

Thise ilkè two of whiche that I you seye,
Whan that hir hertès ful assurèd were,
Tho gonnè they to speken and to pleye,
And ek rehersen how and whan and where
They knewe hem first, and every wo and
fere

That passèd was ; but al that hevinesse,
Y-thankèd God, was tornèd to gladnèsse.

And everè mo, whan that hem fil to speke
Of any wo of swich a time a-gon,
With kissing al that talè sholdè breke,
And fallen in a newè joye anon,
And didn al hir might, sin they were oon,
For to recoverèn blisse and ben at ese,
And passèd wo with joyè countrepese.

Reson wol not now that I speke of sleep,
For it acordeth not to my matère :
God wot, they toke of that ful litel keep !
But lest this night that was to hem so dere
Ne sholde in veyn escape in no manère,
It was biset in joye and bisinesse
Of al that souneth into gentillesse.

Whan that the cok, comúne astrologer,
Gan on his brest to bete and after crowe,
And Lucifer, the dayès messenger,
Gan for to rise and out her stremès throwe,
And estward roos, to him that coude it
knowe,

Fortúna maior, that anon Criseyde
With hertè soor to Troilus thus seyde :

‘Myn hertès lif, my trist, and my plesáunce,
That I was born, allas ! what me is wo,

1391. *Crassus*, M. Crassus, the triumvir, sur-
named *Dives*. When slain in battle (53 B.C.),
molten gold was poured into his mouth, by order
of Orodes, king of Parthia.

1392, 1393. *coveitise*, etc., P G γ *they ben in
the vice*, *And lovers nought, al-though they holde
hem nice*.

1394. *whiche*, γ *whom*.

1402. *wo*, γ *thing*.

1408. *not now*, so S ; Cx. *I now* ; rest omit *now*.

1415. *Whan that*, so J R Cx. H γ S (see note,
l. 1324) ; others *But whan*.

That day of us mot makè dísseveraunce !
For time it is to rise and hennès go,
Or ellès I am lost for everèmo !
O night, allas, why n’iltow over us hove
As longe as whan Almena lay by Jove ?

‘ O blakè night, as folk in bokès rede,
That shapen art by God this world to
hide

At certein timès with thy blakè wede,
That under that men mighte in reste abide,
Wel oughten beestès pleyne and folk thee
chide,

That ther-as day with labour wolde us
breste,
That thou thus fleest, and deynest us not
reste !

‘ Thou dost, allas, too shortly thyn office,
Thou rakel night ! Ther God, makère of
kinde,

For thou so downward hastest of malíce,
Thee corse, and to our hemisperè binde,
That neverèmo under the grounde thou
winde !

For, thorough thy rakel hying out of Troye,
Have I forgon thus hastily my joye !’—

This Troilus, that with tho wordès felte
As thoughte him tho, for pietous distresse,
The bloody terès from his hertè melte,
As he that neverè yit swich hevinesse
Assayèd had out of so gret gladnesse,
Gan therwithal Criseyde, his lady dere,
In armèsstreynè, and seyde in thismanère :

‘ O cruel day, accusour of the joye
That love and night han stole and faste
y-wryen,

Acorsèd be thy coming into Troye,
For every bore hath oon of thy brighte
ýen !

Envious day, what list thee so t’espyn ?

1428. *Almena*, Alcmena, mother of Hercules
by Jupiter.

1431. *blake*, a² G² γ *derke*.

1438-1441. a² G² γ read :

Thée for thyn haste and thyn unkinde vice
So faste’ay to our hemispeere binde,
That nevere more under the grounde thou winde!
For now, for thou so hiest out of Troye,

What hastow lost? What sek'st thou in
this place?
Ther God thy light so quenché for his grace!

'Allas, what han thise lovers thee agilt,
Despitous day? Thyn be the pine of helle!
For many a lover hastow slayn, and wilt;
Thy pouring in wol no-wher lete hem
dwellle!

What profrestow thy light here for to selle?
Go selle it hem that smalé selés grave!
We wol thee not! us nedeth no day have!'

And ek the sonnè, Titan, wolde he chide,
And seide, 'O fool, wel may men thee
despise,

That hast al night the Dawing by thy side
And suffrest her so sone up fro thee rise,
For to disesen lovers in this wise!
What! hold thy bed ther, thou, and ek
thy Morwe!

I preye to God, so yeve you bothé
sorwe!'

Therwith ful sore he sighte, and thus he
seyde,

'My lady right, and of my wele and wo
The verray rote, O goodly myn, Criseyde,
And shal I rise? Allas, and shal I so?
Now fele I that myn hertè mot a-two!
For how sholde I my lif an houré save,
Sin that with you is al the joye ich have?

'What shal I don? For certès I n'ot how,
Ne whan, allas, I may the timé see
That in this plit I may be eft with you!
And of my lif, God wot how that shal be!
Sin that desir right now so streyneth me,
That I am ded anon but I retorne,
How sholde I longe, allas, fro you sojorne?

'But nathêles, myn owné lady bright,
Yit were it so that I wiste outrely

1455. *in*, so H₃ R Cx. H₃; J and others omit.

1464. *wolde*, a² G² γ *gan*.

1466. *Dawing*, wife of Tithonus, whom Chaucer here confuses with Titan.

1473. *verray*, a² G² γ *welie* and (*of*).

1474. *so*, Cl. D G *go*.

1477. *joye* (Boc.), so R H₅; J and others *lif*.

1482. *streyneth* (Boc.), γ *biteth*, *bitleth*, *brenneth*.

1486. *Yit*, γ omit.

That I, your owné servant and your knight,
Were in your herte y-shet as fermely
As ye in myn, (the whiche thing trewely
Me leveré weré than thise worldés
tweyne),

Yit sholde I bet enduren al my payne.'

To that Criseyde answerdè thus anon,
And with a sik she seyde, 'O hertè dere,
The game, y-wis, so ferforth now is gon,
That erst shal Phebus fallen fro his spere,
And everich eglè ben the dowvès fere,
And every roche out of his placé sterte,
Or Troilus out of Criseydc's hertè!

'Ye ben so depe in-with my herte y-grave,
That, though I wolde it torne out of my
thought,

As wisly verray God my soulé save,
To deyen in the payne I couldé nought!
And, for the love of God that us hath
wrought,

Lat in your brayn non other fantasýe
So crepè, that it causè me to dye!

'And that ye me wolde han as faste in minde
As I have you, that wolde I you biseche;
And if I wistè sothly that to finde,
God mightè not a point my joyés eche!
But hertè myn, withouté moré speche,
Beth to me trewe, or ellés were it routhe;
For I am thyn, by God and by my trouthe!

'Beth glad for-thý, and live in sikernesse;
Thus seide I nevere or now, ne shal to mo!
And if to you it were a gret gladnéssé
To torne ayein sone after that ye go,
As fayn wolde I as ye that it were so,
As wisly God myn hertè bringe at reste!'
And him in armés took and oftè kiste.

Ayein his wil, sin it mot nedès be,
This Troilus up ros, and faste him cledde,
And in his armés took his lady free
An hundred time, and on his wey him
spedde;

1487. *owne*, a² γ *humble*.

1488. *y-shet*, a² γ (*y*-) *set*. (See l. 1549.)

1492. *thus*, a² γ *right*; G² and *that*.

1496. *dowvès*, J H₃ R Cx. H₃ *hawkes*.

1517. *that*, J γ omit.

And, with swich vois as though his herté
bledde,
He seidè, 'Far-wel, derè herté swetè !
Ther God us grauntè sounde and sonè
mete !'—

To which no word for sorwè she answérde,
So sorè gan his parting her distreynè ;
And Troilus unto his paleys feide
As wo-bigon asshe was, soth to seyne ; 1530
So harde him wrong of sharp desir the
peyne
For to ben eft ther he was in plesáunce,
That it may nevere out of his rémem-
braunce.

Retornéd to his réal paleys sone,
He softe into his bed gan for to slinke,
To slepè longe as he was wont to done.
But al for naught ; he may wel ligge and
winke,
But slep ne may ther in his herté sinke,
Thinking how she, for whom desir him
brende,
A thousand fold was worth more than he
wen'de. 1540

And in his thought gan up and down to
winde
Her wordès alle and every countenaunce,
And fermèliche inpressen in his minde
The lestè point that to him was plesáunce ;
And verrayliche of th' ilkè rémembraunce
Desir al newe him brende, and lust to brede
Gan more than erst, and yit took he non
hede.

Criseyde also, right in the selvè wise,
Of Troilus gan in her herté shette
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedès
wise, 1550
His gentillesse, and how she with him
mette,
Thankingè Love, he so wel her bisette ;
Desiring eft to han her herté dere
In swich a plit, she dorstè make him chere.

1524. *vois as though, γ wordes as.*1525. *dere, H₅ γ my dere.*1548. *selve, so J R H₃ Cc.; rest same.*1552. *he, S that he.*

Pandáre, a-morwé which that comen was
Unto his nece and gan her fairè grete,
Seide, 'Al this night so reynéd it, allas,
That al my drede is that ye, necé swete,
Han litel leiser had to slepe and mete :
Al night,' quod he, 'hath reyn so don me
wake, 1560
That som of us for gode his hed may ake !'

And ner he com, and seide, 'How stant
it now
This brightè morwé ? Nece, how can ye
fare ?'
Criseyde answérde, 'Nevere the bet for
you,

Fox that ye ben ! God yeve your herté care !
God help me so, ye causéd al this fare,
Trowe I,' quod she, 'for al your wordès
white !
O, who-so seeth you knowèth you ful
lite !'—

With that she gan her facè for to wrye
Al with the shete, and wex for shamè
red ; 1570
And Pandarus gan under for to pryde,
And seidè, 'Nece, if that I shal be ded,
Have here a swerd, and smiteth off myn
hed !'

With that his arm al sodcinly he threste
Under her nekke, and at the laste her keste.

I passe al that which nedeth not to seye.
What ! God foryaf his deth, and she also
Foryaf, and with her unclè gan to pleye,
For other causè was ther non than so. 1579
But of this thing right to th'effect to go,
Whan timè was, hom til her housse wente ;
And Pandarus hath hoolly his entente.

Now tornè we ayein to Troilus,
That restèles ful longe a-beddè lay,
And privly sente after Pandarus
To him to come in al the haste he may.
He com anon, not onès seide he nay ;

1561. *his, so H₃ ; J hir ; H₄ R our. a² G² γ*
*That some of us, I trowe, hir hedes ake !*1563. *brighte, a² (12 γ merie.*1570. *Al with (?) all with.*1570. *red, so a² ; rest al red.*1576. *nedeth, a² G² γ chargeth.*

And Troilus ful sobrelliche he grette,
And down upon his beddè side him sette.

This Troilus, with al th'affeccoun ¹⁵⁹⁰
Of frendès love, that hertè may devise,
To Pandarus on knowès fil adoun;
And, or that he wolde off the place arise,
He gan him thonken in his bestè wise
A thousand time, and gan the day to blesse
That he was born to bringe him fro dis-
tresse.

And seide, 'O frend of frendès alder-
beste

That everè was, the sothè for to telle,
Thou hast in hevene y-brought my soule
at reste

Fro Flegitoun, the fery flood of helle; ¹⁶⁰⁰
That, though I mighte a thousand timèsselle
Upon a day my lif in thy servise,
It mightè not a mote in that suffise.

'Thesonnè, which that al the world may see,
Saw neverè yit, my lif that dar I leye,
So inly fair and goodly as is she,
Whos I am al and shal til that I deye;
And that I thus am hircs, dar I seye,
That thonkèd be the heighè worthinesse
Of Love, and ek thy kindè businesse! ¹⁶¹⁰

'Thus hastow me no litel thing y-yive,
For which to thee obligèd be for ay
My lif. And why? For thorough thy help
I live,

Or ellès ded had I ben mony a day! ¹⁶²⁰
And with that word down in his bed he lay;
And Pandarus ful sobrelliche him herde
Til al was seyde, and than he thus answerde:

'My derè frend, if I have don for thee
In any cas, God wot, it is me lief;
And am as glad as man may of it be, ¹⁶²⁰
God help me so! But tak it not a-grief:
For love of God, be war of this mischief,

^{1595.} *thousand*, a² G² γ *hundred* (γ *sithe* for *time*).

^{1595.} *day to*, a² G² γ *time*.

^{1600.} *Flegitoun*, Phlegethon.

^{1617.} *thus*, γ *him*.

^{1622.} *For love of God*, a² G² γ *That I shal seyu*.

That, ther-as now thou brought art in thy
blisse,

That thou thy-self ne cause it not to misse.

'For of fortunès sharp adversité
The worstè kinde of infortune is this:
A man to han ben in prosperité,
And it remembren whan it passèd is. ¹⁶²⁸
Thou'rt wis y-nough, for-thy do not amis:
Be not too rakel, though thou sittè warne,
For if thou be, certein, it wol thee harme.

'Thou art at esc, and hold thee wel ther-inne;
For also seur as red is every fir,
As gret a craft is kepè wel as winne.
Bridle alwey wel thy speche and thy desir,
For worldly joye halt not but by a wir:
That preveth wel, it brest alday so ofte;
For-thy nede is to werken with it softe! ¹⁶³⁸

Quod Troilus, 'I hope, and God to-forn,
My derè frend, that I shal so me bere, ¹⁶⁴⁰
That in my gilt ther shal no thing be lorn,
N'I wol not rake as for to greven here.
It nedeth not this mater oftè stère;
For, wistestow myn hertè wel, Pandaré,
By God of this thou woldest litel care!'

Tho gan he telle him of his gladè night,
And wher-offirst his hertè dredde, and how;
And seide, 'Frend, as I am trewè knight,
And by that feith I shal to God and you,
I hadde it neverè half so hote as now;
And ay the morè that desir me biteth ¹⁶⁵¹
To love her best, the more it me deliteth.

'I n'ot myself not wily what it is;
But now I fele a newè qualité,
Ye, al another than I dide or this.' ¹⁶⁵⁵
Pandaré answerde, and seide thus, that 'he
That onès may in hevenè blissè be,
He feleth other-weyès, dar I leye,
Than th' ilkè time he first herde of it seye.

This is oo word for al: this Troilus ¹⁶⁶⁰
Was neverè ful to speke of this matère,

^{1643.} *this mater*, etc., a² G² (var.) *al day this thing to tere*.

^{1643.} *stere*, so R Cx. H₃ (see iv. 1451); J and others *tere*.

^{1645.} *By God*, a² G² γ *Cod wot*.

And for to preisen unto Pandarus
The bounté of his righté lady dere,
And Pandarus to thanke and maken chere.
This tale ay was span-newé to biginne,
Til that the night departed hem a-
twinne.—

Sone after this, for-that Fortúne it wolde,
Y-comén was the blisful timé sweté, ¹⁶⁶⁸
That Troilus was warnéd that he sholdé,
Ther he was erst, Criseyde his lady mete ;
For which he felte his herte in joyé flete,
And feithfully gan alle the Goddés herie.
And lat see now, if that he can be merie !

And holden was the forme and al the wise
Of her cominge, and eek of his also,
As it was erst, which nedeth not devise.
But plainly to th'effect right for to go,
In joye and seurté Pandarus hem two ¹⁶⁷⁸
A-bedde broughté, whan hem bothé leste ;
And thus they ben in quiete and in reste.

Not nedeth it to you, sin they ben met,
To axe at me if that they blithé were ;
For if it erst was wel, tho was it bet
A thousand fold : this nedeth not t'en-
quere.

Agon was every sorwe and every fere ;
And bothe, y-wis, they hadde, and so they
wen'de,
As muché joye as herté may comprende.

This n'is no litel thing of for to seye :
This passeth every wit for to devise ; ¹⁶⁸⁹
For ech of hem gan othres lust obeye :
Felicité, which that thise clerkés wise
Commenden so, ne may not here suffise :
This joyé may not writen be with inké :
This passeth al that herté may bi-thinke !

But cruel day (so weylawey the stounde !) ¹⁶⁹⁹
Gan for t'aproche as they by signés knewe,
For which hem thoughté felen dethés
wounde.

So wo was hem, that chaungen gan hir
hewe ;

And day they gonnen to despise al newe,
Calling it traitour, envious, and worse ; ¹⁷⁰⁰
And bitterly the dayés light they corse.

Quod Troilus, ' Allas, now am I war,
That Pireis and the swifté stedés three,
Whiché that drawén forth the sonnés char,
Han gon som by-path in dispit of me :
That makéth it so soné day to be ;
And, for the sonne him hasteth thus to rise,
Ne shal I neveré don him sacrificse ! '

But nedés day departe hem mosté sone ;
And whan hir speche y-don was and hir
chere, ¹⁷¹⁰
Theytwinneanonas they ben wont to done,
And setten time of meting eft i-fere.
And many a night they wroughte in this
manére,
And thus Fortúne a timé ledde in joye
Criseyde and eek this kingés sone of Troye.

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singinges
This Troilus gan al his lif to lede. ¹⁷¹⁷
Hespendeth, jousteth, maketh festeynges ;
He yeveth frely ofte, and chaungeth wede,
And held aboute him ay, withouten drede,
A world of folk, as com him wel of kinde,
The freshest and the besthe coude finde ;

That swich a vois of him was, and a
stevenc,
Throughout the world, of honour and
largésse,
That it up-rong unto the yate of hevenc.
And, as in love, he was in swich gladnése,
That in his herte he deméd, as I gesse,
That ther n'is lover in this world at ese
So wel as he ; and thus gan love him plesse.

The goodlihedé or bounté which that
kinde ¹⁷³⁰
In any other lady hadde y-set
Can not the mountaunce of a knotte
unbinde,
About his herte, of al Criseydes net.

^{1703.} *Pi'eis*, H₃ *Pireys*; H₄ Cx. *Pirers*; others *Pirous Pirus, Pirora*, etc. *Piroeis*, one of the four horses of the Chariot of the Sun; see Ovid, *Met.* ii. 153.

^{1718.} *festeynges*, so S; others *festynges, festeynynges*, etc.

^{1720.} *ay, withouten*, a² G² *y alwey out of*

^{1723.} *of him was, y was of him.*

^{1730.} *bounté*, so J G² A; rest *beaute*.

He was so narwe y-maskèd and y-knet,
That it undon on any maner side,
Thatn'il not ben, forought that may bitide !

And by the hond ful ofte he woldè take
This Pandarus, and into gardin lede,
And swich a feste and swich a proces
make 1739

Him of Criseyde, and of her wommanhede,
And of her beauté, that withouten drede
It was an hevene his wordès for to here ;
And than he woldè singe in this manere :

'Love, that of erthe and see hath
gouvernaunce,

Love, that his hestès hath in hevenès hye,
Love, which that with an holson alliaunce
Halt peples joinèd as him list hem gye,
Love, that enditeth lawe of companye,
And couplès doth in vertu for to dwelle,
Bind this acord that I have told and telle.

'That that the world, with feith which
that is stable, 1751

Diverseth so his stoundès concordinge ;
That clements that ben so discordable
Holden a bond perpetuely duringe ;
That Phēbus mot his rosy day forth bringe ;
And that the mone hath lordship over
the nightes :—

Al this doth Love, ay heried behis mightes !

'That that the see, that gredy is to flowen,
Constreineth to a certein endè so 1759

His flodès, that so fiersly they ne grown
To drenchen erthe and al for everè-mo ;
And if that Love aught lete his bridel go,
Al that now lov'th asonder sholdè lepe,
And lost were al, that Love halt now to-
hepe.

'So woldè God, that auctour is of kinde,
That with his bond Love of his vertu liste

1744. Troilus' Song of Love is taken from
Boethius ii. metre 8. This song (1744-1771) is
omitted in H₂, and inserted later in P.

1746. *which that*, so J H₄ R ; H₅ *that which* ;
rest *that*.

1748. *enditeth*, so J H₄ R G ; H₅ *endith* ; Cx.
enduth ; rest *knetheth*, *kenneth*, etc. (Boethius,
dictat).

1754. *Holden*, J and others *Holde in*.

1760. *fiersly*, R Cx. H₅ Cl. D *freshly*.

To cerclen hertès alle, and faste binde,
That from his bond no wight the wey
out wiste !

And hertèscolde, hem wolde I that het wiste
To make hem love, and that hem liste
ay rewe 1770
On hertès sore, and kepe hem that ben
trewe !—

In allè nedès for the townès werre
He was, and ay the firste in armès dight,
And certeinly, but-if that bokès erre,
Save Ector, most y-drad of any wight ;
And this ences of hardinesse and might
Com him of love, his lady thank to winne,
That alterèd his spirit so withinne.

In time of trewe, on hawking wolde he ride,
Or ellès huntè boor, bere or lioun ; 1780
The smalè beestès leet he gon biside.
And, whan that he com ridng to the toun,
Ful ofte his lady from her window down,
As fressh as faucon comèn out of muwe,
Ful redy was him goodly to saluwe.

And most of love and vertu was his speche,
And in despit hadde allè wrecchednesse ;
And doutès, no nede was him biseche
T'honouren hem that hadden worthinesse,
And esen hem that werèn in distresse
And glad was he, if any wight wel ferde
That lover was, whan he it wiste or herde.

For, soth to seyn, he lost held every wight
But-if he were in Lovès heigh servise,
I menè folk that oughte it ben of right.
And over al this, so wel coude he devise
Of sentement, and in so uncouth wise
Al his array, that every lover thoughte
That al was wel, what-so he seide or
wroughte.

And though that he be come of blood
royal, 1800
Him liste of pride at no wight for to chace :
Benigne he was to ech in general,
For which he gat him thank in every place.
Thus woldè Love, y-heried be his grace,

1782. *to the*, so a² Cx. ; H₅ *into the* ; A *to* ;
J and others *in to*.

That pride, envye, and ire, and avarice
He gan to flee, and everich other vice.

Thou Lady bright, the doughter to Dione,
Thy blinde and winged sone eek, daun
Cupide,

Ye sustren nine eek, that by Elicone
In hil Parnaso listen for t'abide,— 1810
That ye thus fer han deyned me to gide,

1805. *envye*, and *ire*, so J; *a*² R 113 G² Cl. omit *and*; Cx. Cp. H and *ire*, *envye*.

I can no more but, sin that ye wol wende,
Ye heried ben for ay, withouten ende !

Thorough you have I seid fully in my song
Th'effect and joye of Troilus' servise,
Al be that ther was som disese among,
As to myn auctour listeth to devise.
My thriddē book now ende ich in this
wise;

And Troilus in lust and in quiēte 1819
Is with Criseyde, his ownē hertē swete.

BOOK IV

BUT al too litel, weylawey the while,
Lasteth such joye, y-thanked be Fortune,
That semeth trewest whan she wil bigile
And can to folcs so her song untune
That she hem hent and blent, traitour
comune !

And whan a wight is from her wheel y-
throwe,
Than laugheth she, and maketh him a
mowe.

From Troilus she gan her brightē face
Awey to writhe, and took of him non
hede, 9

But caste him clene out of his lady grace,
And on hir wheel she sette up Diomede;
For-which right now myn hertē ginneth
blede,

And now my penne, allas, with which I
write,

Quaketh for drede of that I moste endite.

For how Criseyde Troilus forsook,
Or at the leeste, how that she was un-
kinde,

Mot hennēs-forth ben mater of my book,
As writen folk thorough which it is in
minde.

Allas ! that they sholde everē causē finde
To speke her harm ; and, if they on her
lye, 20

Y-wis, hem-self sholde han the vilanye !

1. R omits ll. 1-28.
7. a. *a*² 113 γ *the*.

O ye Hierinēs, Nightēs doughtren three,
That endēles compleinen evere in peyne,
Megera, Alecte, and eek Thesiphone !
Thou cruel Mars eek, fader to Quirine,
This ilkē ferthē book me helpeth fine,
So that the los of lif and love i-ferē
Of Troilus be fully shewed here.

—Ligging in ost, as I have seid or this,
The Grekēs stronge aboutē Troyē toun, 30
Bifel that, whan that Phebus shining is
Upon the brest of Hercules' Lioun,
That Ector with ful many a bold baroun
Caste on a day with Grekēs for to fighte
As he was wont, to greve hem what he
michte.

N'ot I how long or short it was bitwene
This purpos and that day they issen
mente;

But on a day wel armed, brighte and
shene,

With spere in honde and biggē bowēs
bente,

Ector and many a worthy wight out-
wente ; 40

And in the berd anon withouten lette
Hir fo-men in the feld hem fastē mette.

22. *Hertes*; the Three Furies, Megara, Alecto, and Tisiphone. (See i. 6.)

26. *This ilke ferthe*, *a*² *This ferthe*; H₃ *This fyfte and laste*; H₄ *This ferde and laste*.

29. *seid*, H₄ R Cx. H₃ *told*.

37. *issen*, so J; P *issu*; H₂ *thus*; others *fighten*, *fouhten*. (Boc. usci.)

39, 40. H₃ S γ transpose ll. 39, 40.

The longé day, with spercés sharpe y-
grounde,
With arwès, dartès, swerdès, maces felle,
They fighte, and bringen hors and man to
grounde,
And with hir axes out the brainès quelle.
But in the lastè shour, soth for to telle,
The folk of Troye hem-selven somis-ledden
That with the wors at night homward they
fledden.

Atte whichè day was taken Antenore 50
Maugré Polydamas or Monestéo,
Santippé, Sarpedon, Polynestore,
Polyte, or eek the Trojan daun Riphéo
And othrè lassè folk as Phebuséo;
So that for harm that day the folk of Troye
Dredden to lese a gret part of hir joye.

But nathèles a trewè was ther take
At gret requeste, and tho they gonnen
trete

Of prisoneres a chaungè for to make, 59
And for the surplus yeven sommès grete.
This thing anon was couth in every strete
Bothe in th'assege, in towne, and every
where,

And with the firste it com to Calcas' ere.

When Calcas knew this tretis sholdè holde,
In consistórie among the Grekès sone
He gan in-thringè forth with lordès olde,
And sette him ther-as he was wont to
done;

And with a chaungéd face hem bad a bone,
For love of God to don that reverence
To stintè noise and yeve him audience. 70

Than seide he thus, 'Lo, lordès mine, ich
was

50. *Atte*, so H₂ A; others *alt*.

51. *Maugré Polydamas or*; H₃ *Palidomas*
and also (Boc.)

53. *or*, H₃ and (Boc.)

54. *And*, a² *Or*.

55. *So that for harm that day*, H₃ *For al*
Factor; so *that* (Boc.)

57, 58, 59. So J H₄ R Cx. S (var.); H₃ H₅ a² y
read (var.)

To (of) Priamus was yeve at his (gret, Grek, Grekes)
requeste

A time of trewe, and tho they gonnen tretre
Hir prisoneres to chaungen, most and leste.
(Boc. Chiese Priamo triegua, e fugli data, etc.)

Trojan, as it is knowen out of drede;
And, if that you remembre, I am Calcas
That alderfirst yaf confort to your nede,
And toldè wel how that ye sholden spede:
For dredèles thorough you shal in a stounde
Ben Troye y-brent and beten down to
grounde.

'And in what forme and in what maner
wise

This toun to shende, and al your list
t'acheve, 79
Ye han or this wel herd me you devise:
This knowè ye, my lordès, as I leve.
And, for the Grekès werèn me so leve,
I com my-self in my propre persóne,
To teche in this how you was best to done,

'Having unto my tresour ne my rente
Right no resport, to réspect of your esce.
Thus al my good I leftè, and to you wente,
Wening in this, my lordès, you to plesè.
But al this los ne doth me no disese:
I vouchè-sauf, as wisly have I joye, 90
For you to lese al that I have in Troye,

'Save of a daughter that I leftè, allas,
Sleping at home, whan out of Troye I sterte.
O sterne and cruel fader that ich was!
How mighte I have in that sohardan herte?
Allas, I n'hadde y-brought her in hersherte!
Forsorwe of which I wil not live to morwe,
But-if ye lordès rewe upon my sorwe.

'For, by that cause I say no time or now
Her to delivere, ich holden have my pes;
But now or neverè, yif it likè yow, 101
I may her have right sonè doutèles.
O help and grace! amongès al this pres
Rewe on this oldè catif in distresse,
Sin I thorough you have al this hevinesse!

'Ye have now caught and fetred in prisóun
Trojans y-nowe; and if your willès be
My child with oon may have redempcioun,

80. *me you*, γ *it me*.

87. *leftè*, so J H₃ Cx. A D; others *leste*, *lostè*
(Boc. lasciai).

89. *this*, so J H₃ Cx.; a² H₅ *my*; others *that*.

93. *Troye*, a² H₅ *toune*.

101. *yif*, so J H₃ H₄; D Cp. Cl. *if that*.

Now for the love of God and of bounté,
Oon of so fele, alas, so yeve him me ! 110
What nede were it this prayér for to werne,
Sinyeshal bothe han folk and tounas yerne?

‘On peril of my lif I shal not lye,
Appollo hath me told it feithfully ;
I have eek founde it by astronomye,
By sort and by augúrie eek trewely,
And dar wel seyn the time is fasté by
That fir and flaumbe on al the toun shal
sprede ;
And thus shal Troyé torne in asshen dede.

‘For, certain, Phebus and Neptúnus bothe
That makeden the wallés of the toun 121
Benwith the folk of Troye alwéy so wrothe,
They wol eft bringe it to confusioun
Right for despit of King Laméadoun :
Bi-cause he n’oldé payén hem hir hire,
The toun shal yit be set upon a fire.’

Telling his tale alwey, this oldé greye,
Humble in his speche, and in his lokinge eke,
The salté terés from his ýen tweye
Ful fasté rennen down by either cheke. 130
So longe he gan of socour hem bischeke
That, for to hele him of his sikés sore,
They yave him Antenor withouten more.

But who was glad y-nough but Calcas tho !
And of this thing ful sone his nedés leyde
On hem that sholden for the tretis go,
And hem for Antenor ful ofté preyde
To bringen hom King Thoas and Criseyde :
And whan Priám his savé gardé sente,
Th’embassadours to Troyé streight they
wente. 140

The cause y-told of hir comíngé, the olde
Priam, the king, ful sone in general
Let her-upon his parlément to holde,
Of which th’effect rehersen you I shal :

121. *makeden*, so J R γ (exc. A Cl.) ; a² G² S *maden alle* ; H₃ H₄ Cx. A Cl. *maden*.

123. *They wol eft*, so J H₃ H₄ R Cx. ; others *That they wol*.

132. *sikes*, so J H₃ H₄ R Cx. ; others *sorwes*.

137, 138. H₃ reads :

And hem ful ofte specially preyde
For Antenor to bringe home Criseide.

139. *save garde*, a² G² *saf conduit hem*.

Th’embassadours ben answer’d for finál,
Th’exchaunge of prisoneres and al this nede
Hem liketh wel ; and forth in they procede.

This Troilus was present in the place,
Whan axéd was for Antenor Criseyde ; 149
For-which ful soné chaungen gan his face
As he that with tho wordés wel neigh deyde,
But nathéles he no word to it seyde ;
Lest men sholde his affeccioun espye,
With mannés herte he gan his sorwé drye.

And ful of anguiss and of grisly drede
Abood what other lordés woldé seye ;
And if they woldé graunte, as God forbode,
Th’exchaunge of her, than thoughte he
thingés tweye :
First how to save her honour, and what weye
He mighté best th’eschaunge of her with-
stonde ; 160
Ful faste he caste how al this mighté stonde.

Lové made him al prest to don her bide,
Or rather dyen than she sholdé go ;
But Reson seide him on that other side,
‘Withoute assent of her ne do not so,
If thou debate it, lest she be thy fo,
And seyn that thorough thy medling is
y-blowe
Your bother love, ther it was erst unknowe.’

For-which he gan deliberén for the beste,
That, though the lordés woldé that she
wente, 170
He woldé lete hem graunté what hem leste,
And telle his lady first what that they menté ;
And whan that she had seid him her entente,
Therafter wolde he werken al-so blive,
Theigh al the world ayein it woldé strive.

Ector which that right wel the Grekés herde,
For Antenor how they wolde han Criseyde,
Gan it withstonde and sobrelíche answerde :

156. *other lordes wolde*, a² G² γ *lordes wolde* (un)to it.

162. *made him*, so H₅ A ; rest *him made* (read ? *Lo, Love* ; see i. 603).

163. *Or, γ And*.

166. *If thou debate (it) lest she*, so J H₃ H₄ R ; a² G² γ *Lest for thy werk she wolde be*.

176. *right wel*, so Cx. S ; rest *wel*.

'Sirés, she n'is no prisoner,' he seyde; 179
'I n'ot on you who that this charge leyde;
But on my part ye may eft-sone hem telle,
We usen here no wominen for to selle.'

The noise of peple up-sterté than at ones
As breme as blase of straw y-set on fire;
For Infortüne it woldé for the nones,
They sholden hir confusioun desire.

'Ector!' quod they, 'What gost may you
enspire

This woman thus to shilde, and don us lese
Daun Antenor—a wrong wey now ye
chese-- 189

'That is so wis and eek so bold baroun?
And we han nede of folk as men may se.
He is eek oon the grettest of this toun!
O Ector, lat tho fantasýs be!
O King Priam!' quod they, 'thus siggen
we,

'That al our vois is to forgon Criseyde.'
And to deliveren Antenor they preyde.

O Juvenal, lord, soth is thy sentence:
That liél witen folk what is to yerne,
That they ne finde in hir desir offence;
For cloude of errour letteth hem discernen
What best is. And lo, here ensauple as
yerne! 201

This folk desiren now deliverance
Of Antenor, that broughte hem to
mischance;

For he was after traitour to the toun
Of Troye. Alas, they quitte him out too
rahte!

O nicé world, lo, thy discrecioun!
Criseyde which that neveré dide hem scathe
Shal now no lenger in her blissé bathe;
But Antenor, he shal come hom to toun,
And she shal out: thus seiden here and
houne. 210

For-which deliveréd was by parlément
For Antenor to yelden out Criseyde,
And it pronouncéd by the president,

197. *soth, y trewe.*

200. *lett'ik hem*, so R; H₃ Cx. *let hem to*;
others *lat hem*, *ne lat hem*, *lat hem not*, etc.

Altheigh that Ector nay ful ofté preyde;
That finally, what wight that it withseyde,
It was for naught: it mosté ben and sholde,
For substance of the parlément it wolde.

Departed out of parlément echone,
This Troilus withouté wordes mo
Into his chambré spedde him faste, allone
But-if it were a man of his or two, 221
The whiche he had out fasté for to go,
Because he woldé slepen, as he seyde;
And hastily upon his bed him leyde.

And as in winter levés ben biraft,
Ech after other, til the tree be bare,
So that ther n'is but bark and braunche
y-lafte,
Li'th Troilus biraft of ech welfare,
Y-bounden in the blaké bark of care, 229
Disposéd wood out of his wit to breyde,
So sore him sat the chaunging of Criseyde.

He rist him up, and every dore he shette
And window eek; and tho this sorrowful
man

Upon his beddés side adoun him sette,
Ful lik a ded innagé pale and wan;
And in his brest the hepéd wo began
Outbreste, and he to werken in this wise
In his woodnésse, as I shal you devise.

Right as the wildé bolé ginneth springe
Nowhere, now there, y-darted to the herte,
And of his deth roreth in cōmpleininge,
Right so gan he aboute the chambré sterte,
Smiting his brest ay with his fistés smerte;
His hed to walle, his body to the grounde
Ful ofte he swapté, himselven to confounde.

His yen two for pieté of herte,
Out stremédén as swifté wellés tweye;
The heighé sobbés of his sorwes smerte
His speche him rafte: unnethés mighte
he seye, 249

239. *ginneth*, so G²; P H₃ *ginn'th to*; J and
others *biginneth*.

244. *to walle*, so R; Cx. *to wallys*; J and
others *to the walle*.

246. *pieté*, so J H₂ S; others *pite*, *pete*.

247. *Out stremeden as swifté*, P G² *So wep(t)en
that they semen*.

'O deth, allas! why'n'ilt thou do me deye?
A-corsed be that day which that Nature
Shoop me to be a livés créature!'

But after, whan the furie, and al this rage
Which that his hertè twiste and fastè
threste,

By lengthe of timè somewhat gan aswage,
Upon his bed he leide him doun to reste.
But tho bigonne his terès more out-breste,
That wonder is the body may sutise
To half this wo which that I you devise.

Than seide he thus: 'Fortune, allas the
while! 260

What have I don? What have I thus
a-gilt?

How mightestow for routhè me bigile?
Is ther no grace? And shal I thus be
spilt?

Shal thus Criseyde away, for-that thou
wilt?

Allas, how mayst thou in thyn hertè finde
To be to me thus cruel and unkinde?

'Have I thee not honourèd al my live,
As thou wel wost, above the Goddès alle?
Why wiltow me fro joyè thus deprive?
O Troilus, what may men now thee calle
But wrecche of wrecches, out of honour
falle 271

Into miserie, in which I wol biwaile
Criseyde, allas, til that the breth me faile.

'Allas, Fortune! if that my lif in joye
Displesed hadde unto thy foule envye,
Why n'haddestow my fader king of Troye
Biraft the lif, or don my brethren dye,
Or slain myself that thus compleine and
crye?

I, combrè-world, that may of nothing serve,
But alwey dye and neverè fully sterve!

'If that Criseyde allonè were me laft 281
Nought roughte I whiderward thou woldest
stere;

258. *wonder is*, P G² *wel unnethe* (Doc. appena).

280. *alwey*, γ *everè*.

282. *whiderward*, γ *whider*.

282. *woldest*, so H₁ R; J and others *woldest me*.

And her, allas, than hast thou me biraft!
But everèmo, lo, this is thy manère
To reve a wight that most is to him dere,
To preve in that thy gerful violence!
Thus am I lost: ther helpeth no defence!

'O verray Lord, O Love! O God, allas!
That knowest best myn herte and al my
thought! 289

What shal my sorwful lif don in this cas
If I forgo that I so dere have bought?
Sin ye Criseyde and me han fully brought
Into your grace, and bothe our hertès
seled,

How may ye suffre, allas, it be repeled?

'What shal I don? I shal, whil I may dure
On live, in torment and in cruel peyne
This infortune or this disaventure
Allone as I was born, y-wis, compleyne;
Ne neverè wol I sen it shine or reyne;
But ende I wol, as Edippe in derknèse,
My sorwful lif, and deyen for distresse.

'O wery gost, that errest to and fro, 302
Why n'iltow fien out of the wofullèste
Body that everè mighte on groundè go?
O soulè, lurking in this wo, unneste!
Fle forth out of myn herte and lat it
breste,

And folwe alwey Criseyde thy lady dere
Thy rightè place is now no lenger here.

'O woful yèn two, sin your disport
Was al to seen Criseydes yèn brighte, 310
What shal ye don, but for my disconfort
Stonden for naught and wepen out your
sighte?

Sin she is queynt that wont was you to
lighte,

In veyn fro this forth have ich yèn tweye
I-formèd, sin your vertu is awaye.

295. γ read: *What I may don, I shal, whil I may dure*. Boc. *Che faro io . . . ?* Io pian-gerò . . .

300, 301. P G² H₃ read:

Ne hevenès light (H₃ Ne see no light); and thus I in derknèse

My woful (H₃ sorwful) lif wol enden for (H₃ in) distresse.

306. P G² read:

Fle forth anon, and do myn heite breste.

'O my Criseyde, O lady sovéreyn
Of th' ilké woful soulé that thus cryeth,
Who shal now yevé confort to my payne?
Allas, no wight! But whan myn herté
dyeth,

319

My spirit which that so unto you hyeth
Receive in gre, for that shal ay you serve!
For-tyh no fors is though the body sterve!

'O ye lovères that heighe upon the wheel
Ben set of Fortune, in good áventure,
God levé that ye finde ay love of steel,
And longé mote your lif in joye endure!
But whan ye comen by my sepulture,
Remembreth that your felaw resteth there;
For I lovede eek, though I unworthy were.

'O olde, unholsom and mislived man,—
Calcas I mene,—allas, what aileth thee
To ben a Grek, sin thou art born Troján?
O Calcas, which that wilt my bané be,
In cursed timé was thou born for me!
As woldé blisful Jové for his joye
That I thee haddé wher I wolde in Troye!'

A thousand sikés hotter than the glede
Out of his brest, ech after other, wente,
Meddled with pleintés newe his wo to fede,
For which his woful terés neveré stente; 340
And shortly so his peinés him to-rente,
And wex so maat, that joyé nor penaunce
He feleth non, but li'th forth in a traunce.

Pandaré, which that at the parlément
Had herd what every lord and burgesseyde,
And how ful graunted was by oon assent
For Antenor to yelden so Criseyde,
Can wel neigh wood out of his wit to breyde;
So that for wo he n'isté what he mente,
But in a rees to Troilus he wente. 350

A certein knight, that for the timé kepte
The chambré dore, undide it him anon;
And Pandar, that ful tendreliche wepte,
Into his derké chambré stille as ston
Toward the bed gan softly to gon,

317. *th' ilke*, H₃ Cx. *that*; γ *this*.318. *my*, so P G² H₂ A D; *rest the, thy, your*.347. *yelden*, P G² H₃ *chaungen*.

So cónfus that he n'iste what to seye:
For verray wo his wit was neigh awaye.

And with his chere and loking al to-torn
Forsorwe of this, and with his armés folden,
He stood this woful Troilus biforn, 360
And on his pitous face he gan biholden;
But, Lord, so ofté gan his herté colden,
Seing his frend in wo, whos hevinesse
His herté slough, as thoughte him, for
distresse.

This woful wight, this Troilus, that felte
His frend Pandaré y-comen him to see,
Gan as the snow ayein the sonné melte;
For-which this sorwful Pandar, of pité,
Gan for to wepe as tendreliche as he;
And spechèles thus ben thise ilké tweye,
That neither mighte oo word for sorwéseye.

But at the laste this woful Troilus, 372
Neigh ded for smert, gan bresten out to
rore,

And with a sorwful noise he seidé thus,
Among his sobbés and his sighés sore,
'Lo, Pandar, I am ded, withouté more!
Hastow not herd at parlément,' he seyde,
'For Antenor how lost is my Criseyde?'

This Pandarus, ful ded and pale of hewe,
Ful pitously answerde and seidé, 'Yis! 380
As wisly were it fals as it is trewe
That I have herd, and wot al how it is.
O mercy, God, who wolde han trowéd this!
Who wolde have wen'd that, in so litel a
throwe,
Fortúne our joyé wolde han over-throwe!

'For in this world ther n'is no créature,
As to my doom, that everé saw ruine
Straunger than this, thorough cas or
áventure.

But who may al eschewe or al devine?

357. *neigh*, P G² H₃ S Cx. *al*; A *now*; D *om*.358. *And*, P G² H₃ *But*.359. *For sorwe of this*, P G² Ny *ded for wo*.
(H₃ omits l. 359.)362. *But*, P G² H₃ *And*.373. *Neigh ded for smert*, P G² H₃ *For cruel*
herte (G² *smert*).384. *litel*, R *lite*.

Swich is the world ! For-thy I thus define :
Ne trust no wight to finden in fortune 391
Ay propreté ; her yiftés ben commúne.

‘ But tel me this, why thou art now so mad
To sorwen thus. Why li’stow in this wise,
Sin thy desir al hoolly hastow had,
So that by right it oughte y-nough suffice?
But I, that neveré felte in my servise
A frendly chere or looking of an ye,
Lat me thus wepe and wailen til I dye !

‘ And over al this, as thou wel wost thy-
selve,

This town is ful of ladies al aboute ; 401
And, to mydoom, fairer than swiché twelve
As evere she was, shal I finde in som route,
Ye, oon or two, withouten any doute.
For-thy be glad, myn owné deré brother !
If she be lost, we shal recovere another !

‘ What ! God forbede alwey that ech
plesáunce

In oo thing were, and in non other wight !
If oon can singe, another can wel daunce ;
If this be goodly, that is glad and light ;
And this is fair, and that can good a-right.
Ech for his vertu holden is for dere, 412
Bothe heroner and faucon for rivére !

‘ And ek, as writ Zanzis that was ful wis,
“Thenewé love out-chaseth ofte the olde,”
And upon newé cas li’th newe avis.
Thenk ek thy lif to savén artow holde !
Swich fir by proces mot of kindé colde ;
For sin it n’is but casuel plesáunce, 419
Som cas shal putte it out of rémembraunce.

‘ For al-so seur as day com’th after night,
The newé love, labour or other wo,
Or ellés seldé seing of a wight,
Don olde affecciouns alle over-go.
And, for thy part, thou shalt han oon of tho
T’abreggè with thy bittré peinés smerte :
Absence of her shal drive her out of
herte !’—

This wordés seide he for the nonés alle,
To helpe his frend, lest he forsorwé deyde ;

410. *that, y she.*

419. *n’is, so H₁ R Cx. ; J and others is.*

For doutéles, to don his wo to falle, 430
He roughté not what unthrift that heseyde.
But Troilus, that neigh for sorwé deyde,
Took litel hede of al that evere he mente ;
Oon ere it herde, att’other out it wente.

But at the laste answerde and seidé, ‘Frend,
This lechecraft, or heléd thus to be,
Were wel sittíng, if that I were a fend.
To traysen her that trewe is unto me !
I preye God, lat this conseil neveré thé ;
But do me rather sterve anon right here,
Or I so do as thou me woldest lere ! 441

‘ Shethat I serve, y-wis, what-so thou seye,
To whom myn herte enhabit is by right,
Shal han me hoolly heres til that I deye.
What ! Pandarus, sin I have her bihight,
I wol not ben untrewé for no wight ;
But as her man I wol ay live and sterve,
And neveré other créature serve !

‘ And ther thou seyst thou shalt as fairé finde
As she, lat be, mak no comparisoun 450
To créature y-forméd here by kinde !
O levé Pandar, in conclusioun,
I wol not ben of thyn opinioun
Touching al this ; for-thy, I thee biseche,
So hold thy pees : thou sleest me with
thy speche !

‘ Thou biddest me I sholdé love another
Al fresshly newe, and lat Criseyde go !
It li’th not in my powér, levé brother ;
And though I mighte, I wolde not do so.
But canstow pleyén raket, to and fro, 460
Nettle in, dokke out, now this, now that,
Pandáre,
Now foulé falle her for thy wo that care !

‘ Thou farest ek by me, thou Pandarus,
As he that, whan a man is wo-bigon,
He com’th to hima pas and seith right thus,

434. *att’other, so P H₁ ; rest at the other, at that other, at other.*

435. *laste, so H₁ R H₁ ; others last(e) he.*

438. *her, so J P G² H₃ A D Cl. ; rest a wight.*

445. *What, so J P G² H₃ ; rest For.*

445. *her bihight, so J P G² H₃ ; rest trouthly her hight (plight).*

464. *man, so a (= J P G² H₃) ; rest wight.*

"Thenk not on smert, and thou shalt
felé non !"

Thou most me first transmuwén in a ston,
And revé me my passiounés alle,
Or thou so lightly do my wo to falle ! 469

'The deth may wel out of my brest departe
The lif, so longé may this sorwé mine ;
But fro my soulé shal Criseyde's darte
Outneveré mo ; but doun with Proserpine,
Whan I am ded, I wol go wone in pine ;
And ther I wol eternaly compleyne
This wo, and how that twinned be we
tweyne !

'Thou hast here maad an argument, for syn,
How that it sholde a lassé peiné be
Criseyde to forgon, for she was myn,
And livede in ese and in felicité ! 480
Why gabbestow ? that seidest thus to me,
That "him is wors that is fro weley-throwe,
Than he had erst non of that wele y-
knowe !"

'But sey me this : sin that thee think'th
so light
To chaungé so in love ay to and fro,
Why hastow not don bisily thy night
To chaungen her that doth thee al thy wo ?
Why n'iltow lete her from thy herté go ?
Why n'iltow love another lady swete,
That may thyn herté setten in quiéte ? 490

'If thou hast had in love ayyit mischaunce,
And canst it not yit fro thyn herté drive,
I, that have lived in lust and in plesáunce
With her as muche as créature on-live,
Howsholde I that foryete, and that so blive ?
O where hastow ben hid so longe in muwe,
That canst so wel and formaly arguwe !

'Nay, Pandarus, naught worth is al thy red ;
But doutéles, for aught that may bifalle,

480. *livede*, G² R Cx. Cl. *live(n)*.

484. *sey me this*, so a ; rest *tel me now, tel me this*.

492. *yit fro*, so a (H₃ om. *yit*) ; rest *out of*.

493. *have lived (?)*, H₅ *have had* ; G *havede* ; rest *lived(e)* (read ? *livede ay*, Boc.).

498. *Nay, Pandarus*, so a ; H₂ H₄ R Cx. S *Nay, nay, God wot* ; γ *Nay, God wot*.

499. So a ; rest read *For which, for what that evere may bifalle*.

Withouten wordés mo, I wol be ded ! 500
O deth, that ender art of sorwés alle,
Com now, sin I so ofte after thee calle ;
For sely is that deth, soth for to seyne,
That, ofte y-cleped, com'th and endeth
peyne !

'Wel wot I, whil my lif was in quiéte,
Or deth me slowe I wolde han yiven hire ;
But now his coming is to me so swete
That in this world I no thing so desire.—
O deth, sin with this sorwe I am on fire,
Thou outhur do m' anon in terés drenche,
Or with thy coldé strok myn heté quenche !

'Sin that thou sleest so fele in sondry wise
Aycins hir wil, unpreyéd, day and night,
Do me at my requesté this servise : 514
Deliveré now the world, than dostow right,
Of me that am the wofullesté wight
That everé was ; for time is that I sterve,
Sin in this world of right naught may I
serve !'—

This Troilus in terés gan distille,
As licour out of alambic, ful faste ; 520
And Pandarus gan holde his tongé stille,
And to the grounde his yen doun he caste.
But nathéles thus thoughte he at the laste,
'What, parlé, rather than my felaw deye,
Yit shal I somewhat more unto him seye !'

And seidé, 'Frend, sin thou hast swich
distresse,
And sin thee list myn arguments to blame,
Why n'ilt thy-selven helpé to redresse,
And with thy manhod letten al this grame ?
To ravisshe her ne canstow not ? for shame !
And outhur lat her out of touné fare 531
Or hold her stille, and lef this nicé care !

'Artow in Troye, and hast non hardiment
To take a womman which that loveth thee
And wolde her-selven ben of thyn assent ?

506. *deth*, so a ; rest *thou*.

507. *his*, so a (H₃ omits) ; rest *thy*.

511. *hete*, so J H₄ R H₁ Cl. (Boc.) ; H₂ *herte hete* ; rest *herte*.

515. *than*, so a A D ; rest *so*.

530. *To*, so J H₂ D Cx. Cl. ; rest *Go*.

532. *this nice care*, Cx. γ *thy nice fare*.

Now is not this a nicé vanité?
Ris up anon, and lat thy weping be,
And kith thou art a man; for in this houre
I wol be ded, or she shal bleven oure !—

To this answeerde him Troilus ful softe,
And seide, 'Pardé, levé brother dere, 541
Al this have I my-selve y-thought ful ofte,
And more thing than thou devisest here.

But why this thing is left, thou shalt wel
here ;

And whan thou me hast yiven audience,
Ther-after maystow telle al thy sentence.

'First, sin thou wost this town hath al this
werre

For ravissing of women so by might,
It sholdé not be suffred me to erre, 549
As it stant now, ne don so gret unright.
I sholde han also blame of every wight,
My fadres graunt if that I so withstood,
Sin she is chaunged for the townés good.

'I have ek thought, so it were her assent,
To axe her at my fader of his grace ;
Than thanke I, this were her accusé-
ment,

Sin wel I wot I may her not purcháce.
For sin my fader in so heigh a place
As parlément hath her eschaunge enseled
He n'il for me his honour he repeled. 560

'Yit drede I most her herté to perturbe
With violence, if I do swich a game ;
For, if I wolde it openly disturbe,
It mosté be disclaundré to her name,
And me were leveré ded than her defame.
As n'oldé God but-if I sholdé have
Her honour leveré than my lif to save !

'Thus am I lost, for aught that I may see ;
For certein is, sin that I am her knight,
I have her honour leveré yit than me 570
In every cas, as lover oughte of right.
Thus am I with desir and reson twight :
Desir for to disturben her me redeth,
And reson n'il not, so myn herté dredeth.'

560. honour, so a ; rest *lettre*.

571. In, J H₃ H₅ And in.

Thus weping that he coudé neveré cesse,
He seide, 'Allas, how shal I, wrecché,
fare ?

For wel fele I alwéy my love encresse,
And hope is lasse and lasse alwéy, Pandaré ;
Encressen ek the causes of my care ; 579
So weylawcey, why n'il myn herté breste ?
For-why in love is litel hertés reste !—

Pandaré answeárdé, 'Frend, thou mayst for
me

Don as thee list. But hadde ich it so hote,
And thyn estat, she sholdé go with me !
Though al this town cri'de on this thing
by note,

I n'olde sette at al the noise a grote !

For whan men han wel cried, than lat
hem rouné !

For wonder last but nine night nevere in
touné !

'Deviné not in reson ay so depe

Nepreciously, but help thy-selve anon ! 59c

Bet is that other than thy-selvé wepe,
And namély sin ye two ben al oon !

Ris up, for by myn hed she shal not gon !
And rather be a lite in blame y-founde
Than sterve here as a gnat withouté
wounde !

'It is no rape in my dom, ne no vice,
Her to with-holden that thee loveth most.
Paraunter she may holden thee for nice
To lete her go thus to the Grekés oost. 599
Think ek Fortüne, as wel thy-selven wost,
Hhelpeth an hardy man to his emprise,
And fleeth fro wrecches for hir cowardise.

'And though thy lady wolde a lite her greve,
Thou shalt thy pees ful wel her-after make ;

581. *For-why in love*, so J P G ; H₃ H₅ *For*
whil I live ; rest read *for as in love ther is but*
litel reste.

587. *lat hem rouné*, so a ; rest *wol they rouné*.
588. *For*, so a D ; Cl. A ; rest *Ek*.

590. *precioustly*, so a ; R *preciently* ; Cx.
curiously ; rest *curteysly*. (Boc. *sottimento*.)

596. *rape in my dom*, so a ; rest *no shame*
(un)to you (thee).

597. *thee loveth*, J *thee lovest* ; others var.

601. *an*, so R Cx. S ; rest omit.

602. *fleeth fro*, so a Cx. ; rest *weyveth*.

But as for me, certein, I can not leve
That she wolde it as now for yvel take.
Why sholdé thanne of-fér'd thyn herté
quake?

Thenk how that Paris hath, that is thy
brother,

A love; and why shaltow not have another?

'And Troilus, oo thing I dar thee swere:
That if Criseyde, which that is thy lief, 611
Now loveth thee as wel as thou dost here,
God help me so, she n'il not take a-grief
Theigh thou do bote anon in this mischief.
And if she wilneth fro thee forth to passe,
Than is she fals: so love her wel the lasse!

'For-thy tak herte, and thenk thus as a
knight:

Thorough love is broken alday every lawe.
Kith now somwhát thy corage and thy
might,

Have mercy on thy-self for any awc. 620
Lat not this wrecched wothyn herté gnawe,
But manly set the world on sixe and sevene,
And if thou deye a martir, go to hevenc!

'I wol my-self ben with thee at this dede,
Though ich and al my kin upon a stounde
Shulle in a strete as dogges liggen dede,
Thorough-girt with many a wide and bloddy
wounde.'

In every cas I wol a frend be found. 628
And if thee list here sterven as a wrecche,
Adieu, the devil have him that it recche!'

This Troilus gan with tho wordés quiken,
And seide, 'Frend, gramercy, ich assente.
But certainly thou mayst not so me priken,
Ne peyné non ne may me so tormente,
That for no cas it is not myn entente,
At shorté wordés, though I deyén sholde,
To ravisshe her, but-if herselfe it wolde.'

Pandáre answerde, 'Of that be as be may!
But tel me thanne, hastow herwil assayed,
That sorwest thus?' And he answerde,
'Nay.'

640

630. *have*, so a; rest *spede*.

630. *it*, J and others omit.

638. So a; rest read 'Why so mene I,' quod Pandar, 'at this day.'

'Wher-of artow,' quod Pandar, 'than
amayed,

That n'ost not that she wol ben yvele apayed
To ravisshe her, sin thou hast not ben there,
But any aungel tolde it in thyn ere?

'For-thy ris up, as naught ne were, anon,
And wassh thy face, and to the king thou
wende,

Or he may wondren why thou art thus gon.
Thou most with wisdom him and othré
blende,

Or upon cas he may after thee sende 649
Or thou bewar. And, shortly, brotherdere,
Be glad, and lat me werke in this matére.

'For I shal shape it so, that sikerly
Thou shalt this night, som time in som
manére,

Come speken with thy lady prively;
And by her wordés ek and by her chere
Thou shalt ful sone aparceive and wel here
Al her entente, and of this cas the beste.
And far now wel, for in this point I reste.'

The swifté Famé, which that falsé thinges
Egál reporteth lik the thingés trewe, 660
Was thorough-out Troye y-fled with presté
winges

Fro man to man, and made this talcal newe,
How Calcas' doughter with her brighté
hewe,

At parlément, withouté wordés more,
Y-graunted was in change of Antenore.

The whiché tale anon right as Criseyde
Had herd, she, which that of her father
roughte

As in this cas right naught, ne whan he
deyde,

Ful bisily to Jupiter bisoughte
Yeve him mischauncé that this tretis
broughte;

670

But, shortly, lest thisé tales sothé were,
She dorste at no wight axen it for fere,

644. *But any aungel*, so a; rest *But if that Jove*.

647. *why thou art thus*, so a (G *whedyr thou art thus*); rest *whider thou art*.

657. *of*, S y in.

Asshe that hadde her herte and al her minde
 On Troilus biset so wonder faste,
 That al this world ne mighte her love
 unbinde,
 Ne Troilus out of her hertē caste,
 She wol ben his, whil that her lif may laste:
 And thus she brenneth bothe in love and
 drede,
 So that she n'istē what was best to rede.

But, as men sen in tounes al aboute, 680
 That women usen frendles to visite,
 So to Criseyde of women com a route
 For pitous joye, and wen'den her delite,
 And with hir talcs, dere y-nough a mite,
 Thise women whiche that in the cité
 dwelle,
 They sette hem down, and seide as I shal
 telle.

Quod first that oon, 'I am glad, trewely,
 Bicause of you that shal your fader see.'
 Another seide, 'Y-wis, so n'am not I;
 For al too litel hath she with us be.' 690
 The thriddle answerde, 'I hope, y-wis,
 that she
 Shal bringen us the pees on every side;
 That, when she go'th, almighty God her
 gide!'

Tho wordes and tho womanisshē thinges
 She herdē right as though she thennēs were,
 For al this while her herte on other thing is,
 Although the body sat among hem there;
 God wot her advertece is ellēwhere,
 For Troilus ful faste her soulē soughte: 699
 Withoutē word alwēy on him she thoughte.

Thise women, that so wen'den her to plesē,
 Aboutē naught thus gonne hir talcs spende:
 Swich vanité ne can don her non esc,
 As she that al this menē whilē brende
 Of other passioun than that they wen'de,
 So that she felte almost her hertē dye
 For wo, and wery of that companye.

691. *The thriddle answerde*, so a; rest *Quod (tho) the thriddle*.

696. *al this while*, so a; rest *God it wot*.

698. *So a; rest Her advertece (R Cx. audience) is alwēy ellēwhere*.

For-which no lenger mightē she restreyne
 Her tercs, so they gonnē up to welle,
 That yaven signēs of the bittre payne 710
 In which her spirit was and mostē dwelle,
 Remembring her from hevēne into which
 helle
 She fallen was, sin she forgo'th the sighte
 Of Troilus; and sorrowfully she sighte.

And th' ilkē foolēs, sitting her aboute,
 Wen'den that she so wepte and sightē sore,
 Bicause that she sholdē from that route
 Departe, and neverē playē with hem more.
 And they that hadde knowē her of yore
 Saye her so wepe, and thoughte it kindē-
 nesse; 720
 And ech of hem wep ek for her distresse.

And bisily they gonnē her conforten
 Of thing, God wot, on which she litel
 thoughte,
 And with hir wordēs wen'den her disporten,
 And to be glad they often her bisoughte.
 But swich an esc therwith they her
 wroughte,
 Right as a man is escd for to fele,
 For ache of hed to clawen him on his hele!

But after al this nicē vanité
 They toke hir leve, and hom they wenten
 alle. 730
 Criseyde, ful of sorwful pietē
 Into the chaumbre up wente out of the halle,
 And on her bed for ded she gan to falle,
 In purpos neverē thennēs for to rise;
 And thus she wroughte as I shal you devise.

The saltē tercs from her yēn tweyne
 Out-ronne as shour in Aperil ful swithe:
 Her whitē brest she bet, and for the payne

708. ll. 708-714 are oimitted in γ (= A D Cp. H₁ Cl. S₂).

716. *so wepte*, so Cx.; rest *wepte*.

731. *piete*, so S Cp.; others *pilee*, *pete*, etc.

736. α (J P G H₃) have this stanza here (Boccaccio's order); β (H₂ H₄ R Cx.) and γ (S A D Cp. H₁ Cl. S₂) have it after l. 756.

736. β γ read:

Therwith the teres from hir yēn two
 Down fille . . .

737. *ful*, so G R; Cx. *doth*; rest omit. H₄ *shoures in Aprille swithe*.

738. *peyne*, β γ *wo*.

After the deth she cri'de a thousand sithe,
Sin he that wont her wo was for to lithe 740
She mot forgon; for which disaventure
She held herself a forlost creature.

Her ounded heer, that sonnissch was of hewe
She rente, and ek her fingres longe and
smale

She wrong ful ofte, and bad God on her
rewe

And with the deth do bote upon her bale.
Her hewé, whilom bright that tho was pale,
Bar witness of her wo and her constreynte;
And thus she spak, sobbing in her compleynte:

'Allas!' quod she, 'out of this regioun 750
I, woful wrecche and infortunéd wight,
And born in curséd constellacioun,
Mot gon, and thus departen fro my knight!
Wo worth that day, and namély that night,
On which I saw him first with yén tweyne,
That causeth me, and ich him, al this peyne!

'What shal he don? What shal I don also?
How shal I live, if that I from him twinne?
O deré herte ek, that I lové so,
Who shal that sorwé slec that ye ben
inne? 760

O Calcas fader, thyn be al this sinne!
And curséd be that day which that Argive
Me of her body bar to ben on-live!

'To what fin sholde I live and sorwé thus?
How sholde a fissh withouté water dure?
What is Criseyde worth from Troilus?
How sholde a plaunte or other créature
Livén withoute his kindé noriture?
For-which ful ofte a by-word here I seye,
That, "erthéles, mot grené soné deye." 770

'I shal don thus: sin nother swerd ne darte
Dar I non handlè for the cruelté,

754. β γ read:
Wo worth, alas, that ilke dayes light.

757. β γ read:
She seyde, 'How shal he don, and I also?

762, 763. β γ read:
O moder myn, that cleped were Argyve,
Wo worth that day that thou me bere on lyve.
770. *ertheles*, β γ *roteles*.

That ilké day I shal from you departe,
If sorwe of that n'il not my bané be,
Ther shal no mete or drinké come in me,
Til I my soule out of my brest unshethe;
And thus myselven wol I do to dethe.

'And Troilus, my clothés everychon
Shal blaké ben, in tokening, herté swete,
That I am as out of this world agon, 780
That wont was you to holden in quieté;
And of myn ordre, til that deth me mete,
The observances evere in your absence
Shal sorwé be, compleynte, and abstinence.

'Myn herte and ek the woful goost therinne
Biquethe I, with your spirit to compleyne
Eternaly, for they shul neveré twinne.
For theigh in erthey-twinnéd be we tweyne,
Yit in the feld of pité, out of peyne,
Ther Pluto regneth, shal we ben i-fere, 790
As Orphéus with Euridíce, his fere.

'Thus herté myn, for Antenor, alas,
I soné shal be yolden, as I wene!
But how shal ye don in this woful cas?
How shal your tendré herté this sustene?
But herté myn, foryet this sorwe and tene,
And me also; for, sothly for to seye,
So ye wel fare, I recché not to deye!'—

How mighte it evere al red ben or y-songe
The pleynté that she made in her
distresse? 800

I n'ot; but, as for me, my litel tonge,
If I discrivé wolde her hevinesse,
It sholdé make her sorwé semé lesse
Than that it was, and childissly deface
Her heighe compleynte; and therfor ich
it pace.

Pandaré,—which that sent fro Troilus
Was to Criseyde, as ye han herd devise
That for the beste it was accorded thus,
And he ful glad to don him this servise,—

773. *I shal*, so α ; β *I mot*; γ *that I*.
783. *observances*, so J only; rest *observaunce*.
790. *Ther Pluto regneth*, β γ *That high(e)*
Elysos.
793. *yolden*, β γ *chaunged*.
799. *al red*, so J H₃ only; other (γ) *red*. (Boc.
narrare a pieno.)

Unto Criseyde, in a ful secré wise, 810
Ther-as she lay in torment and in rage,
Com her to telle al hoolly his message.

And fond that she herselven gan to trete
Ful pitously; for with her salté teres
Her brest, her face, y-bathéd was ful wete,
The mighty tresses of her sonniss heres,
Unbroiden, hanging al aboute her eres:
Which yaf him verray signal of martire
Of deth, which that for wo she gan desire.

Whan she him saw, she gan for shame
anon 820

Her tery face atwixe her armés hide;
For which this Pandar is so wo-bigon
That in the chaumbre he mighte unnethe
abide,
As he that pité felte on every side;
For if Criseyde had erst compleynéd sore,
Tho gan she pleyne a thousand times more.

And in her aspré pleynté thus she seyde,
'Myn em, Pandaré, of joyés mo than two
Was causé causing first to me Criséyde,
That now transmuwéd ben in cruel wo: 830
Whe'r shal I seyn to you welcôme or no,
That alderfirst me broughte into servise
Of love, allas, that endeth in swich wise?

'Endeth than love in wo? Ye, or men
lieth;

And every worldly joye, as thinketh me!
The ende of blisse, ay sorwe it occupieth!
And who-so troweth not that it so be,
Let him upon me, woful wrecche, y-see,
That my-self hate, and ayny burthe acorse,
Feling alwéy, fro wikke I go to worse! 840

'Who-someseeth, heseeth sorweal at ones,
And peyné, torment, pleynté, wo, dis-
tresse!

819. *for wo she, ß γ her herte.*
820. *shame, so a; ß γ sorwe.* (Boc. per ver-
gogna.)

823. *chaumbre, ß γ hous.*

828, 829. *ß γ read:*

Pandaré first of joyes mo than two
Was cause causing unto me, Criseyde.

835. *every worldly joye, ß γ a(l)e worldly blisse.*

842. *And peyne (γ) all Feyne.*

842. P G Cx. R Cl. *and before distresse.*

Out of my sorwful body harm ther non is,
As anguissh, langour, cruel bitternesse,
Anoy, smert, dredé, furie, and ek siknesse!
I trowe, y-wis, from hevené terés reyne
For pité of myn aspre and cruel peyne! 850

'And thou, my suster, ful of dísconfort,'
Quod Pandarus, 'what thenkestow to do?
Whyn'hastow to thyselfensom resport? 850
Why wiltow thus thyselfe, allas, fordo?
Leve al this werk, and tak now hedé to
What I shal seyn, and herkne of good
entente

This that by me thy Troilus thee sente.'

Tornéd her tho Criseyde, a wo makinge
So gret that it a deth was for to see.

'Allas!' quod she, 'what wordés may ye
bringe?

What wil my deré herté seyn to me,
Which that I dredé neveré-mo to see?
Wil he han pleynte of terés or I wende? 860
I have y-nowe, if he ther-after sende!'

She was right swich to sen in her viságe
As is that wight that men on beré binde;
Her facé, lik of Paradis th'imáge,
Was al y-chaungéd in another kinde;
The pley, the laughter, men was wont to
finde

In her, and othré joyés everychone
Benfled; and thus for hem she li'th allone.

Aboute her yen two a purpré ring 869
Bitrent, in sothfast tokening of her peyne,
That to beholde it was a dedly thing;
For which Pandaré mighté not restreyne
The terés from his yen for to reyne.
But nathéles, as he best mighte, he seyde
From Troilus thise wordes to Criseyde:

'Lo, nece, I trowe wel ye han herd al how
The king with othré lordés for the beste
Hath maad th'eschaunge of Antenor and
you, 878

That cause is of this wo and this unreste.
But how this cas doth Troilus moleste,

867. *othre, a ß ek her.*

868. *for hem she lith, a ß lith (now) Criseyde.*

That may no worldly mannés tongéseye,—
As he that shortly shapeth him to deye.

‘For which we han so sorwed, he and I,
That into litel bothe it hadde us slawe,
But thourgh my conseil this day finaly
He somewhat hath fro weping him with-
drawe;

And semeth me that he desireth fawe
With you to ben al night, for to devise
Remédie in this, if ther were any wise.

‘This’, short and pleyn, th’effect of my
message, 890

And ek the beste as my wit can comprende;
For ye, that ben of torment in swich rage,
May to no long prológe as now entende.
And her-upon ye may answe’re him sende;
And, for the love of God, my necé dere,
So lef this wo or Troilus be here!’

‘Gret is my wo,’ quod she, and sightésore,
As she that felth dedly sharp distresse;
‘But yit to me his sorwe is muché more,
That love him bet than he himself, I gesse.
Allas! for me hath he swich hevynesse?
Can he for me so pitously compleyne?
Now, wis, his sorwé doublethal my payne!’

‘Grevous to me, God wot, is for to twinne,’
Quod she, ‘but yit it harder is to me
To sen him in that wo that he is inne;
For wel I wot, it wil my bané be,
And deye I wol in certein!’—Tho quod
she,

‘But bid him come, or deth, that thus
me threteth,
Drive out that goost which in myn herté
betheth.’ 910

Thise wordés seid, she on her armés two
Fil gruf, and gan to wepen pitously.—
Quod Pandarus, ‘Allas! why do ye so,
Sin wel ye wot the time is fasté by

882. *γ* read:

For verray wo his wit is al aweye.
(Boc.) Il qual del tutto in duol ne vuol morire.

891. *β γ* read:

As ferforth as my wit can (may) comprehende.
903. *Now, wis, his, β γ Y-wis, this.*

That he shal come? Aris up softely,
That he you not biwopen thus *y-finde*,
But ye wol han him wood out of his minde!

‘For wiste he that ye ferde in this manére,
He wolde himselven slec; and if I wen’dé
To han this fare, he sholdé not come here
For al the good that Priam may dispende;
For to what fin he wolde anon pretende,
That wot I wel! And therfor yit I seye,
Lat be this sorwe, or platly he wol deye!

‘And shapeth you his sorwé for t’abregge
And not encesse, O levé necé swete!
Beth rather to him cause of flat than egge,
And with som wisdom ye his sorwé bete.
What helpeth it to wepen ful a strete, 929
Or though ye bothe in salté terés dreynthe?
Bet is a time of cure ay than of pleynte!

‘I mené thus: whan ich him hider bringe,
Sin ye ben wise and bothe of oon assent,
So shapeth, how distorbé this goinge,
Or come ayein sone after ye be went.
Wommen ben wise of short avisement.
And lat sen how your wit shal now availle;
And that that I can helpe, it shal not
faile!’

‘Go,’ quod Criseyde, ‘and unclé, trewely,
I shal don al my might, me to restreyne
Fro weping in his sighte; and bisily, 941
Iim for to glade, I shal don al my payne,
And in my herté seken every veyne.
If to this soor ther may be founden salve,
It shal not lakké, certein, on myn halve!’

Go’th Pandarus, and Troilus he soughte,
Til in a temple he fond him al alone,
As he that of his lif no lenger roughete;
But to the pitous Goddés everychone
Ful tendrely he prey’dé and made his
mone, 950
To don him sone out of this world to pace;
For wel he thoughte ther n’as non other
grace.

947. *al alone*, so J H₃ Cx. S Cp.; rest *allonc*.
950-952. P H₃ read:

He faste made his compleynthe and his mone,
Beseking hem to sende him other grace,
Or fro this world to don him sone pace.

And, shortly, al the sothé for to seye,
He was so fallen in despair that day,
That outrély he shoop him for to deye ;
For right thus was his argument alwey :—
He seide ' I n'am but lorn, so weylawey !
For al that com'th, com'th by necessité :
Thus, to be lorn, it is my destiné !

' For certainly, this wot I wel,' he seide,
' That for-sight of divinè Púrveyaunce 961
Hath seyn alwéy me to forgon Criseyde,
Sin God seeth every thing, out of doutaunce,
And hem dispoñeth thorough his ordinaunce,
In hir meritès sothly for to be,
As they shul comén by predestiné.

' But nathêles, allas, whom shal I leve ?
For ther ben gretè clerkès many oon,
That destiné thorough argumentès preve ;
And some men seyn that nedly ther is
noon, 970
But that free chois is given us everychoon.
O, weylawey ! So sleighe am clerkès
olde,
That I n'ot whos opinioun I may holde.

' For somemen seyn, if God seeth al biforn,
(Ne God may not deceivèd ben, parde !)
Than mot it fallen, though men hadde it
sworn,
That Púrveyaunce hath seyn biforn to be.
Wherfor I seye that from eterne if he
Hath wist bifore our thought ek as our
dede, 979
We han no free chois, as thise clerkès rede.

' For other thought nor other dede also
Mighte neverè be, but swich as Púrvey-
aunce,
Which may not ben deceivèd neverè mo,
Hath fel'd biforn withouten ignoraunce.
For, if ther mightè ben a variaunce
To writen out fro Goddès púrveyinge,
Ther n'ere no prescience of thing comíng,

953. H₃ and H₄ omit ll. 953-1085; P inserts them later. G omits ll. 953-1078. This passage (not in Boccaccio) is taken for the most part from *Boethius*, bk. v.

957. *I n'am*, J Cx. S D *I am*; P H₂ *y he n'as*.

957. *so*, so J R Cx. S D; P H₂ *y* omit.

984. *fel'd*, R Cx. *felt*; D *felle*.

' But it were rather an opinioun
Unstedfast, and no certein forseinge ;
And certès that were an abusoun, 990
That God sholde han no parfit cleer wítinge
More than we men that han doutous
weníng.
But swich an errour upon God to gesse
Were fals and foul, and wikked corsdednesse.

' Ek this is an opinioun of some
That han hir top ful heighe and smothe
y-shore :
They seyn right thus, that thing is not to
come
For-that the Prescience hath seyn bifore
That it shal come ; but they seyn that,
therefore
That it shal come, therefore the Púrvey-
aunce 1000
Wot it biforn withouten ignoraunce.

' And in this maner this necessité
Retorneth in his part contrárie ageyn.
For nedfully bihov'th it not to be
That th'ilké thingès fallen in certéyn
That ben purvey'd ; but nedly, as they
seyn,
Bihoveth it that thingès whiche that falle,
That they in certein ben purveyèd alle.

' I mene as though I labour'd me in this,
T'enqueren which thing cause of which
thing be : 1010
As whether that the prescience of God is
The certein cause of the necessité
Of thingès that to comén ben, pardé ;
Or if necessité of thing comíng
Be causè certein of the púrveyinge.

' But now n'enforce I me not in shewing
How th'ordre of causes stant. But wel
wot I
That it bihoveth, that the bifallíng
Of thingès wistè biforn certeinly
Be necessaarie, al seme it not therby 1020
That prescience put falling necessaarie
To thing to come, al falle it foule or faire.

989. *Unstedfast*, so J P Cx. D; rest *Uncertain*.
989. *certein*, so J P Cx. (D omit); rest *stedfast*.

‘For if ther sit a man yond on a see,
Than by necessité bihoveth it
That certès thyn opinioun soth be,
That wenest or conjectest that he sit;
And further over now ayeinward yit,
I.o, right so is it of the part contrarie,
As thus :—now herkné, for I wol not
tarie.—

‘I seye, that if th’opinioun of thee 1030
Be soth for-that he sit, than seye I this,
That he mot sitten by necessité,
And thus necessité in either is.
For in him nede of sitting is, y-wis,
And in thee nede of soth; and thus, for-
sothe,
Ther mot necessité ben in you bothe.

‘But thou mayst seyn: the man sit not
therfore
That thyn opinioun of sitting soth is,
But rather, for the man sit ther bifore,
Therfor is thyn opinioun soth, y-wis. 1040
And I seye, though the cause of soth of this
Com’th of his sitting, yit necessité
Is entrechaungéd bothe in him and thee.

‘Thus in this samé wise, out of doutaunce,
I may wel maken, as it semeth me,
My resoninge of Goddès purveyaunce
And of the thingès that to comèn be:
By whichè resons men may wel y-see
That th’ilkè thingès that in erthè falle,
That by necessité they comen alle. 1050

‘For although that, for thing shal come,
y-wis,
Therefore is it purveyéd, certainly,
Not that it cometh for it purvey’d is,—
Yit nathéles bihov’th it nedfully
That thing to come be purvey’d (rewély):
Or ellès, thingès that purveyéd be,
That they bitiden by necessité.

‘And this suffiseth right ynough, certeyn,
For to destroye our free chois every del!
But now is this abusioun, to seyn 1060

1030. *that*, Cx. omits.

1038. *of sitting*, so P only; rest *of his sitting*.

1048. *resons*, all *reson*.

That falling of the thingès temporel
Is cause of Goddès prescience éternel.
Now trewely that is a fals sentence,
That thing to come shul cause his pre-
science!

‘What mighte I wene, and I had swich a
thought,
But that God purvey’th thing that is to
come
For that it is to come, and ellès nought?
So mighte I wene that thingès alle and
some,
That whilom ben bifalle and overcome,
Ben cause of th’ilkè sovereign Purveyaunce
That forwot al withouten ignoraunce! 1071

‘And over al this, yit seye I more therto:
That, right as whan I wot ther is a thing,
Y-wis that thing mot needfully be so,—
Ek right so, whan I wot a thing coming,
So mot it come. And thus the bifalling
Of thingès that ben wist biforn the tide,
They mowe not ben eschuwéd on no
side.’—

Than seide he thus, ‘Almighty Jove in trone,
That wost of al this thing the sothfastnesse,
Rewe on my sorwe, and do me deyen sone,
Or bring Criseyde and me from this dis-
tresse!’

And whil he was in al this hevinesse,
Disputing with himself in this matére,
Com Pandar in, and seide as ye may here.

‘O mighty God,’ quod Pandarus, ‘in trone!
Ey! who say evere a wis-man faren so?
Why, Troilus, what thenkestow to done?
Hastow swich list to ben thyn ownè fo?
What, parldé, yit is not Criseyde ago! 1090
Why list thee so thyself fordon for drede,
That in thyn hed thine yen semen dede?’

‘Hastow not livéd of thy lif biforn
Withouten her, and ferd ful wel at ese?
Artow for her and for non other born?’

1064. *shul*, so R Cx.; P *shal*; J and others
shulde, *sholde*.

1065. P omits ll. 1065-1071.

1093. *of thy lif*, so J (P *H₃ at thy lif*; G *of tyn*
in thyn lif); B γ *many a yer*.

Hath Kinde y-wrought thee only her to
plese?

Canstow not thenken thus in thy disece,
That, on the dees right as thee fallen
chaunces,

In love also ther come and gon plesaunces?

'And yit this is my wonder most of alle;
Why thou thus sorwest, sin thou n'ost not
yit,

Touching her going, how that it shal falle,
Ne, if she can herself disturben it,
Thou hast not yet assayed al her wit.

A man may al by-time his nekkè bede
Whan it shal off, and sorwen at the nede!

'For-thy tak hedè what I shal thee seye:
I have with her y-spoke and longe y-be,
So as acorded was bitwixe us tweye;
And everémo me thinketh thus, that she
Hath somwhat in her hertès privètè,
Wher-with she can, if I shal right arede,
Stinte al this thing of which thou art in
drede.

'For-which my conseil is, whan it is night,
Thou to her go and make of this an ende;
And blisful Juno, thorough her gretè might,
Shal, as I hope, her grace unto us sende.
Myn hertè seith, "certein, she shal not
wende";
And for-thy put thyn herte a while in reste,
And hold thy purpos, for it is the beste.'

This Troilus answerde, and sightè sore,
'Thou sey'st right wel, and I wil don
right so.'

And what him list he seide to him more.
But whan that it was timè for to go,
Ful prively himself, withouten mo,
Unto her com, as he was wont to done;
And how they wroughte, I shal you tellen
sone.

1097. *Canstow not thenken*, β γ *Lat be, and
thenk right* (var.).

1099. *In love also*, β γ *Right so in love*.

1100. *my*, S γ a.

1113. *Stinte al this thing*, β γ *Disturbe al
this*. (See l. 1103.)

1124. *But*, so a β (Boc.); S γ *And*.

Soth is, that whan they gonnen first to mete,
So gan the sorwe hir hertès for to twiste,
That neither of hem other mightè grete,
But hem in armès hente and softè kiste;
The lassè woful of hem bothè n'iste
What for to don, ne mighte a word out-
bringe,

As I seide erst, for wo and for sobbinge.

The woful terès that they leten falle
As bittrè weren, out of terès kinde,
For peyne, as is ligne aloès or galle:
So bittrè terès wep not thorough the rinde
The woful Mirra, writen as I finde;
That in this world ther n'is so hard an herte,
That n'olde han rewèd on hir peynès smerte.

But whan hir woful wery goostès tweyne
Retornèd ben ther-as hem oughtè dwelle,
And that somwhat to weykengan the peyne
By lengthe of pleynte, and ebben gan the
welle

Of bittrè terès, and the herte unswelle,
With broken vois, al hoors for-shrigh, t
Criseyde

To Troilus thise ilkè wordès seye:

'O Jove, I deye, and mercy I beseche!
Help, Troilus!'—And therwithal her face
Upon his brest she leyde, and lostè speche,
Her woful spirit from his proprè place,
Right with the word, alwey o-point to pace.
And thus she li'th with hewès pale and
grene,

That whilom fressh and fairest was to sene.

This Troilus, that on her gan biholde,
Cleping her name,—and she layas for ded,
Withoute answerè, and felte her limès
colde,

Her yèn throwen upward to her hed,—
This sorwful man can now no maner red,

1133. *What for to don*, so a Cx.; β γ *Wher
that he was*.

1138, 1139. β γ read:

So bittre teres wep not, as I finde,
The woful Myrra through the bark and rinde.

1146. *bittre* (?), H₄ *the*; H₂ om.; J and others
hir(e). (Boc. Gli occhi dolenti per gli aspri disiri.)
See ll. 1136-1138 (Boc. Ch'amare fosser oltre loi
natura).

But oftē time her coldē mouth he kiste :
 Whe'r him was wo, God and himself it
 wiste !

He rist him up, and long streight he her
 ' leyde ;

For signe of lif, for aught he can or may,
 Can he non finde in no cas on Criseyde,
 For which his song ful ofte is 'weylawey !'
 And whan he saw that spechcles she lay,
 With sorful vois and herte of blisse al
 bare,

He seide how she was fro this world y-fare.

So after-that he longe had her compleyned,
 His hondes wrong, and seid that was to
 seye,

And with his terēs salte his brest bi-reyned,
 He gan the terēs wipen off ful dreye,
 And pitously gan for the soulē preye,
 And seidē, 'Lord, that set art in thy trone,
 Rewe ek on me, for I shal folwe her sone !'

She cold was, and withouten sentēment
 For aught he wiste, and breth ne felte
 he non ;

And that was him a preignant argument
 That she was forth out of this world agon.
 And whan he saw ther was non other won,
 He gan her limēs dresse in swich manēre,
 As men don folk that shul ben laid on bere.

And after this, with sterne and cruel herte,
 Hisswerd anon out of the she the he twichte,
 Himself to sleen, how sorē that him smerte,
 So that his soule her soulē folwē mighte
 Ther-as the doom of Minos wolde it dighte ;
 Sin Love and cruel Fortune it ne wolde
 That in this world he lenger liven sholde.

Than seide he thus, fulfil'd of heigh desdayn,
 'O cruel Jove, and thou Fortune adverse,
 This' al and som : that falsly han ye slayn
 Criseyde, and sin ye can do me no werse,
 Fy on your might and werkēs so diverse !
 Thus cowardly ye shal me neverē winne :
 Ther shal no deth me fro my lady twinne !

1167. *And, β γ But.*

1173. *ful, so P β γ ; J H₃ G and.*

1183. *folk, β γ hem (him).*

'For I this world, sin ye han slain her
 thus,

Wol lete, and folwe her spirit forth in hye :
 Shal neverē lover seyn that Troilus 1200
 Dar not for ferē with his lady dye ;
 For, certein, I wol bere her companye.
 But sin ye n'il not suffre us liven here,
 Yit suffreth that our soulēs ben i-fere !

'And thou citē, which that I leve in wo,
 And thou Priām, and brethren alle i-fere,
 And thou, my moder, far-wel, for I go !
 And Atropos, mak redy thou my bere !
 And thou, Criseyde, swetē hertē dere,
 Receivē now my spirit !'—wolde he seye,
 With swerd at herte, al redy for to deye,

But, as God wolde, of swough therwith
 she breyde,

And gan to sike, and 'Troilus !' she cride,
 And he answerdē, 'Hertē thou my bere !
 Livē ye yit ?' and let his swerd down glide.
 'Ye, hertē myn, y-thankēd be Cipride !'
 Quod she ; and therwithal she sorē sighte,
 And he bigan confortē her as he mighte ;

Took her in armes two, and kiste her ofte,
 And her to glade he dide al his entente :
 For-which her goost, that flikerēd ay on
 lofte,

Ayein into her herte al softē wente.
 So at the laste, as that her ye glente
 Aside, anon she gan his swerd espyce,
 As it lay bare, and gan for ferē crye,

And axēd him, why he it hadde out-drawe.
 And Troilus anon the causē tolde,
 And how himself therwith he wolde han
 slawe :

For which Criseyde upon him gan biholde,
 And gan him in her armēs fastē folde, 1230

1199. *forth in hye, β γ love or (and) hye.*

1208. *So P H₃ β γ ; J G read Thou Atropos that is (G art) ful redy here (read ? for I go To Atropos that is ful redy here. Boc. ch'io me ne vo sotterra).*

1214. *Herte ; β γ Lady (Boc. dolce mio disiro).*

1218. *conforte, β γ to glade (see l. 1220). Boc. la conforto.*

1222. *β γ read :*

Into her woful herte .ayein it wente.

1223. *So, β γ But.*

And seide, 'O mercy, God, lo, which a dede!

Allas! how neigh we weré bothé dede!

'Than if I n'haddé spoke, as graccé was,
Ye wolde han slain yourself anon?' quod she.—

'Ye, doutéles!'—And she answórde,
'Allas!

For by that ilké Lord that madé me,
I n'olde a forlong wey on-live han be
After your deth, to han ben crownéd quene
Of al the lond the sonne on-shineth shene;

'But with this selven swerd, which that here
is,

1240

My-selve I wolde han slawé!'—Quod she
tho,

'But ho! for we han right ynough of this,
And lat us rise and streight to beddè go,
And theré lat us spoken of our wo;
For, by the morder which that I see brenne,
Knowe I ful wel that day is not fer henne.'

Whan they were in hir bed in armés folden,
Nought was it lik the nightés her-biforn;
For pitously ech other gan biholden,
As they that hadde hir joyés allé lorn, 1250
Seyng, 'allas, that everé they were born!'—
Til at the laste this woful wight, Criseyde,
To Troilus thise ilké wordés seyde:

'Lo, herté myn, wel wot ye this,' quod she,
'That, if a wight alwéy his wo compleyne
And sketh nought how holpen for to be,
It n'is but folý and encrees of peyne.
And sin that here assembled be we tweyne
To findé bote of wo that we ben inne,
It were al timé soné to biginne. 1260

'I am a woman, as ful wel ye wot;
And as I am aviséd sodeinly,
So wol I telle it you whil it is hot.
Me thinketh thus: that nouthur ye nor I
Oughte half this wo to maken skilfully;

1241. *slave*, so G R; rest *slain*.

1251. β γ read:

Biwalling ay the day that they were born.

1252. *woful*, so a β S; γ *sorrowful*.

For ther is art y-nough for to redresse
That yit is mis, and sleen this hevynesse.

'Soth is, that wo the whiche that we ben
inne,

For aught I wot, for nothing ellés is 1260
But for the causé that we shullen twinne:
Consideréd al, ther n'is no more amis.
But what is thanne a rémedie unto this,
But that we shape us soné for to mete!
This' al and som, my deré herté swete!

'Now, that I shal wel bringen it aboute
To come ayein sone after that I go,
Therof am I no maner thing in doute.
For, dredéles, withinne a wowke or two
I shal ben here; and that it may be so,
By allé right, and in a wordés fewe, 1280
I shal you wel an hep of weyés shewe

'For-which I n'il not maken long sermoun,
For time y-lost may not recoveréd be;
But I wol go right to conclusioun,
And to the beste, in aught that I can see.
And for the love of God, foryive it me
If I speke aught ayeins your hertés reste,
For trewély I speke it for the beste;

'Making alwey a protestacioun,
That in effect this thing that I shal seye 1290
N'is but to shewén you my mocoun,
To finde unto our help the besté weye.
And taketh it non other wise, I preye;
For finaly what-so ye me comaunde,
That wol I don, for that is no demaunde.

'Now herkneth this: ye han wel under-
stonde
My going graunted is by parlément
So ferforth that it may not ben withstonde
For al this world, as by my jugément.
And sin ther helpeth non avisément 1300
To letten it, lat it passe out of minde,
And lat us shape a bettré wey to finde.

1284. *right to conclusioun*, β γ to *my conclusioun*.

1288. *speke*, J *seye*; P *meue*.

1290. *in effect this thing*, β γ now *thise wordes whiche*.

1294. *finaly*, H₃ β γ *in effect*.

‘Thesoth is this, that twinning of ustweyne
Wol us dise and cruëliche anoye,
But him bihoveth sometime han a peyne,
That serveth Love, if that he wol have joye.
And sin I shal no ferther out of Troye
Than I may ride ayein on half a morwe,
It oughte lassé causen us to sorwe :

‘So as I shal not so ben hid in muwe, 1310
That day by day, myn owné herté dere,
(Sin wel ye wot that it is now a truwe,)
Ye shal ful wel al myn estat y-here.
And, or that trewe is don, I shall ben here,
And thus have ye bothe Antenor y-wonne
And me also. Beth glad now, if ye conne,

‘And thenk right thus : “ Criseyde is now
agon,
But what ! sheshal come hastily ayeyn ! ” —
‘And whanne, allas !’ — “ By God, lo, right
anon,

Or day’s ten, that dar I sauflly seyn ! 1320
And thanne atte ersté shal ye ben so feyn
That we shul everé-mo togederé dwelle,
That al this world ne mighte our joyé telle.

‘I see that often, ther-as we ben now,
That for the beste, our conseil for to hide,
Ye speken not with me, nor I with yow
In fourtynight, ne see you go ne ride.
Mowén ye not ten dayés thanne abide
For myn honouér in swich an áventure ?
Y-wis, ye mowén ellés lite endure ! 1330

‘Ye knowe ek how that al my kin is here,
Only but-if that it myn fader be,
And ek mine othrè thingès alle i-fere,
And namèly, my deré herté, ye,
Whom that I n’oldé leven for to see
Foral this world, as muche as it hath space ;
Or ellés see ich neveré Jovés face !

‘Why ! trowé ye my fader in this wise
Coveiteth so to see me, but for drede
Lest in this town that folkés medespise 1340
Bicause of him, for his unhappy dede ?
What wot my fader what lif that I lede ?

1315. thus, β γ than(ne).

1328. Mowén (?) all May (see 1330).

1336. muche, H₃ brode; β γ wid(e).

For if he wiste in Troye how wel I fare,
Us nedeth for my going naught to care.

‘Ye sen that every day ek more and more
Men trete of pees, and it supposéd is
That men the quene Eleyné shal restore,
And Grekès us restoren that is mis ;
So, though ther n’eré confort non but this,
That men purpósen pees on every side, 1350
Ye may the bettre at ese of herte abide.

‘For if that it be pees, myn herté dere,
The nature of the pees mot nedés drive
That men moste entrecómunen i-fere,
And to and fro ek ride and go as blive,
Alday as thikke as been fien from a hive,
And every wight han libérté to bleve.
Wher-as him list the bet, withouten leve.

‘And though so be that pees ther may be
non,
Yit hider, though ther neveré pees ne were,
Imosté come : for whidersholde Igon, 1361
Or how mischauncé sholde I dwellen there
Among tho men of armés evere in fere ?
For which, so wisly God my soulé rede,
I can not sen wherof ye sholden drede.

‘Have here another wey, if it so be
That al this thing ne may you not suffice.
My fader, as ye knowén wel, pardé,
Is old, and elde is ful of covetise ; 1369
And I right now have founden al the gise,
Withouten net wherwith I shal him hente.
And herkneth how, if that ye wol assente !

‘Lo, Troilus, men seith that hard it is,
The wolf ful and the wether hool to have ;
This is to seyn, that men ful ofte, y-wis,
Mot spenden part the remenaunt for to save.
For ay with gold men may the herté grave
Of him that set is upon covetise.
And how I mene, I shal it you devise.

‘The moeblé which that I have in this
town 1380
Unto my fader shal I take, and seye,
That right for trust and for savacioun
It sent is from a frend of his or tweye,
The whiché frendés fervently him preye

To senden after more, and that in hye,
Whil-that this town stant thus in jupartye;

' And that shal ben a hugé quantité,—
Thus shal I seyn;—but lest it folk espi'de,
This may be sent by no wight but by me.
I shal ek shewen him, if pees bitide ¹³⁹⁰
What frendès that I have on every side
Toward the court, to don the wrathè pace
Of Priamus, and don him stonde in grace.

' So, what for oo thing and for other, swete,
I shal him so enchaunten with my sawes,
That right in hevene his soulè shal he
mete !

For al Appollo, or his clerkes lawes
Or calcinge availeth not three hawes !
Desir of gold shal so his soulè blende, ¹³⁹⁹
That, as me list, I shal wel make an ende !

' And if he wolde aught by his sort it preve
If that I lye, in certain I shal fonde
Distorben him and plukke him by the sleve
Making his sort, or beren him on honde
He hath not wel the Goddès understonde :
For Goddes speke in amphibologies,
And for a soth they tellen twenty lyes !

' Ek dredè fond first Goddès, I suppose,—
Thusschal I seyn,—and ek his coward herte
Made him amis the Goddès text to glose
Whan he for-ferèd out of Delphos sterte.
And, but I make him sonè to converte,
And don my red withinne a day or tweye,
I wol to you obligè me to delye !'

And trewèliche as writen wel I finde,
That al this thing was seid of good entente,
And that her hertè trewè was and kinde
Towàrdèshim, and spak right as shemente,
And that she starf for wo neigh, whan she
wente, ¹⁴¹⁹

And was in purpos everè to ben trewe :
Thus writen they that of her werkès knewe.

This Troilus with herte and erès spradde
Herde al this thing devisen to and fro ;

^{1396.} *soule*, H₁ S D H₁ Cl. *soule* is.

^{1409.} *ek*, H₃ B γ *that*.

^{1415.} *as*, J D *is*.

And verrayliche him semèd that he hadde
The selvè wit ; but yit to lete her go
His hertè mis-foryaf him everè-mo.
But finaly he gan his hertè wreste
To tristen her, and took it for the beste.

For which the gretè furie of his penauce
Was queynt with hope ; and therwith hem
bitwene ¹⁴³⁰

Bigan for joyè th'amoroussè daunce.
And as the briddès, whan the sonne is shene,
Deliten in hir song in levès grene,
Right so the wordès that they spake i-ferè
Delited hem, and made hir hertès clere.

But nathèles the wending of Criseyde,
For al this world, ne may out of his minde :
For-which ful ofte he pitousliche her
prey'de

That of her herte he mighte her trewè
finde,

And seyde her,—' Certès, if ye ben un-
kinde, ¹⁴⁴⁰

And but ye come at day set into Troye,
Ne shal I nevere have hele, honouir, ne
joye.

' For al-so soth as sonne uprist a-morwe,
And God ! so wisly thou me, woful
wrecche,

To restè bringe out of this cruel sorwe,
I wil myselfen slee if that ye drecche !
But of my deth though litel be to recche,
Yit, or that ye me causen so to smerte,
Dwel rather here, myn ownè dere herte !

' For trewèly, myn ownè lady dere, ¹⁴⁵⁰
Tho sleightès yit that I you herè stere
Ful shaply ben to failen alle i-ferè ;
And thus men seith, that "oon thenketh
the bere,

But al another thenketh his ledère !"
Your sire is wis : and scid is, out of drede,
"Men may the wise at-renne, and not
at-rede !"

' It is ful hard to halten unespyed
Bifore a crepil, for he can the craft :
Your fader is in sleighte as Argus yed. ¹⁴⁵⁹

^{1449.} *dere*, γ *swete*.

For, al be that his moeble is him biraft,
His oldē sleighte is yit so with him laft,
Ye shal not blende him for your womman-
hede,
Ne feyne aright : and that is al my drede.

‘ I n’ot if pees shal everē-mo bitide ;
But, pees or no, for earnest ne for game,
I wot, sin Calcas on the Grekēs side
Hath onēs ben and lost so foule his name,
He dar no more come here ayein for
shame :

For-which that wey, for aught I can espye,
To trusten on, n’is but a fantasye. 1470

‘ Ye shal eeksen, your fader shal you glose
To ben a wif, and as he can wel preche,
He shal som Grek so preyse and wel alose,
That ravisschen he shal you with his speche,
Or do you don by force as he shal teche ;
And Troilus, of whom he n’il have routhe,
Shal causēles so sterven in his trouthe !

‘ And over al this, your fader shal despise
Us alle, and seyn this citē n’is but lorn,
And that the segē neverē shal arise, 1480
For-why the Grekēs han it allē sworn
Til we be slayn and doun our walles torn ;
And thus he shal you with his wordēs fere,
That ay drede I that ye wol bleven there.

‘ Ye shal ek sen so many a lusty knight
Among the Grekēs, ful of worthinesse,
And ech of hem with hertē, wit, and might
To plesen you don al his bisnesse,
That ye shul dullen of the rudēnesse
Of us sely Trojāns, but-if routhe 1490
Remordē you, or vertu of your trouthe.

‘ And this to me so grevous is to thinke
That fro my brest it wol the soulē rende ;
Ne, dredēles, in me ther can not sinke
A good opinioun, if that ye wende ;
For-why your fadressleightē wol usshende :
And if ye gon, as I have told you yore,
So think I n’am but ded, withoutē more !

‘ For-which, with humblē, trewe and
pitous herte, 1499

A thousand timēs mercy I you preye :
So reweth on mine asprē peynēs smerte,
And doth somwhat as that I shal you seye,
And lat us stele away bitwixe us tweye ;
And think that foly is, whan man may
chese,
For accident his substaunce ay to lese.

‘ I menē thus : that sin we mowe or day
Wel stele away and ben togedrē so,
What wit were it to putten in assay,
In cas ye sholden to your fader go,
If that ye mighten come ayein or no ? 1510
Thus mene I, that it were a gret folyē
To putte that sikernes in jupartye.

‘ And, vulgarly to speken of substaunce
Of tresour, may we bothē with us lede
Y-nough to live in honour and plesāunce,
Til into timē that we shal be dede ;
And thus we may eschewē al this drede :
For everich other wey ye can recorde,
Myn herte, y-wis, may therwith not acordē.

‘ And hardily ne dredeth no povértē, 1520
For I have kin and frendēs ellēwhere
That, though we comē in our barē sherte,
Us sholdē neither lakken gold ne gere,
But ben honourēd whil we dwelten there :
And go w’ anon : for, as in myn entente,
This is the beste, if that ye wol assente.’—

Criseyde him, with a sik, right in this wise
Answērde, ‘ Y-wis, my derē hertē trewe,
We may wel stele away, asye devise, 1529
Or finden swiche unthrifty weyēs newe ;
But afterward ful sore it wol us rewe.
And, help me God so at my mostē nede,
As causēles ye suffren al this drede !

‘ For th’ilkē day that I for cherisshinge,
Or drede of fader, or for other wight,
Or for estat, delit, or for weddingē
Be fals to you, my Troilus, my knight,
Saturnēs daughter, Juno, thorough her
might,

1490. *Trojāns* (?), all *Trojans* (read ? *As of us sely Trojans*).

1493. *the, β γ my.*

1527. *him, H₃ γ omit.*

1530. *Or, γ and.*

As wood as Athamanté do me dwelle
Eternaliche in Stix, the put of helle ! 1540

‘ And this on every God celestial
I swere it you, and ek on ech Goddésse,
On every Nympe and Deité infernal,
On Satiry and Fauny more and lesse,
That halvé Goddés ben of wilderness ;
And Attropos my thred of lif to-breste
If I be fals ! Now trowe me if you leste !

‘ And thou, Simoys, that as an arwé clere
Thorough Troye ay rennest downward to
the see, 1549

Ber witesse of this word that seid is here,
That th’ilké day that ich untrewé be
To Troilus, myn owné herté free,
That thou retorné backward to thy welle,
And I with body and soulé sinke in helle !

‘ But that ye speke, away thus for to go
And leten alle your frendés, God forbede
For any womman that ye sholdé so !
And namély, sin Troye hath now swich
nede

Of help. And ek of oo thing taketh hede :
If this were wist, my lif laye in balaúnce,
And your honour : God shilde us fro
mischaunce ! 1561

‘ And if so be, hereafter pees be take,—
As alday happeth, after anger, game,—
Why, Lord, the sorwe and wo ye wolden
make,

That ye ne dorsté come aycin for shame !
And, or that ye jupartén so your name,
Beth not too hastif in this hoté fare :
For hastif man ne wanteth neveré care !

‘ What trowén ye the peple ek al aboute
Wolde of it seye ? It is ful light t’arede !
They wolden seyn, and swere it out of
doute, 1571
That love ne drof you not to do this
dede,
But lust voluptuous and coward drede :

1549. *ay rennest*, so J H₃ A D ; *rennest* P G
R Cx. ; H₂ H₄ S Cp. H₁ Cl. S₂ *rennest* ay.
1562. *hereafter pees be take*, so P ; rest *that
pees hereafter take*.

Thus were al lost, y-wis, myn herté dere,
Your honour, which that shineth now so
clere.

‘ And also thenketh on myn honesté
That floureth yit : how foule I sholde it
shende,
And with what filthe it spotted sholdé be,
If in this forme I sholdé with you wende.
Ne though I livede unto the worldés ende,
Mynamé sholde I nevercayeinward winne :
Thus were I lost, and that were routhe
and sinne.

‘ And for-thy slee with reson al this hete !
Men seyn “the suffrant overcom’th,”
pardé ;

Ek, “who-so wol han lief, he lief mot lete.”
Thus maketh vertu of necessité !
Be pacient, and thenk that lord is he
Of Fortune ay, that naught wol of her
recche,

And she ne daunteth no wight but a
wrecche ! 1589

‘ And trusteth this : that certés, hertés weté,
Or Phebus’ suster, Lúcina the shene,
The Lioun passe out of this Ariete,
I wil ben here, withouten any wene.
I mene, as help me Juno, hevenés quene,
The tenthé day, but-if that deth m’assaile,
I wil you sen, withouten any faile.’—

‘ And now, so this be soth,’ quod Troilus,
I shal wel suffre unto the tenthé day,
Sin that I see that nede it mot be thus.
But for the love of God, if it be may, 1600
So lat us stelen privéliche away !
For evere in oon, as for to live in reste,
Myn herté seith that it wol be the beste.’—

‘ O mercy, God, what lif is this !’ quod she.
‘ Allas, ye slee me thus for verray tene !
I see wel now that ye mistrusten me,
For by your wordés it is wel y-sene !
Now, for the love of Cynthea the shene,

1575. *shineth now*, so P H₃ ; rest *now shineth*.
1587. *Be pacient*, so P G H₃ R ; J and others
By patience.

Mistrust me not thus causéles, for routhe,
Sin to be trewe I have you plight my
trouthe ! 1610

‘ And thenketh wel, that sometime it is wit
To spende a time, a time for to winne.
Ne, pardé, I am I not fro you yit,
Though that we ben a day or two a-twinne.
Drif out the fantasycs you withinne,
And trusteth me, and leveh ek your sorwe,
Or, her my trouthe, I wil not live til morwe !

‘ For if ye wiste how sore it doth mesmerte,
Ye woldé cesse of this : for God, thou wost
The puré spirit wepeth in myn herte 1620
To sen you wepen that I lovè most,
And that I mot gon to the Grekès ost !
Ye, n’ere it that I wistè remedye
To come ayein, right here I woldé dye !

‘ But, certès, I am not so nice a wight
That I ne can imaginen a wey
To com ayein that day that I have hight.
For who may holde a thing that wol awaye ?
My fader nought, for al his queynté pley !
And by my thrift, my wending out of
Troye 1630
Another day shal torne us al to joye !

‘ For-thy with al myn herte I you biseke,
If that you list don aught for my preyére
And for that love which that I love you eke,
That, or that I departè fro you here,
That of so good a confort and a chere
I may you sen, that ye may bringe at reste
Myn herté which that is o-point to breste.

‘ And over al this I preyé you,’ quod she tho,
‘ Myn ownè hertès sothfast suffisaunce, 1640
Sin I am thyn al hool, withouten mo,
That whil that I am absent, no plesaunce
Of other do me fro your rémembraunce ;
For I am evere a-gast, for-why men rede
That “ love is thing ay ful of bisy drede.”

‘ For in this world ther liveth lady non,
If that ye were untrewé (as God defende !),
That so bitrayséd were or wo-bigon
As I, that allé trouthe in you entende.

And doutéles, if-that I other wen’dé, 1650
I n’ere but ded. And, or ye causé finde,
For Goddès love, so beth me not un-
kinde !’—

To this answérd Troilus, and seyde,
‘ Now God, to whom ther n’is no thought
y-wrye,
Me glade, as wis I nevere unto Criseyde,
Sin th’ilkè day I saw her first with ye,
Was fals, ne neverè shal til that I dye !
At shortè wordès, wel ye may me leve :
I can no more, it shal be founde at
preve !’— 1659

‘ Gramercy, goodé myn, y-wis !’ quod she,
‘ And blisful Venus, lat me neverè sterve
Or I may stonde of plesaunce in degree
To quite him wel, that so wel can deserve !
And whil that God my wit wil me con-
serve,
I shal so don, so trewe I have you founde,
That ay honoúr to me-ward shal rebounde !

‘ For trusteth wel, that your estat réal,
Ne veyn delit, nor only worthinesse
Of you in werre or torney marcial, 1669
Ne pompe, array, nobléye, or ek richesse
Ne madè me to rewé on your distresse,
But moral vertu, grounded upon trouthe :
That was the cause I first had on you
routhe !

‘ Ek gentil herte and manhod that ye hadde,
And that ye hadde, as me thoughte, in
despit
Evéry thing that sounéd into badde,
As rudnesse and poeplish appetit,
And that your reson bridleth you delit :
This made, aboven every créature
That I was youre, and shal whil I may
dure. 1680

‘ And this may lengthe of yerès not fordo,
Ne rémuable Fortune it deface.
But Jupiter, that of his might may do
The sorwful to be glad, so yive us grace,
Or nightès ten, to meten in this place,

1654. *thought, þy cause.*
1682. *it, so S; rest om.*

So that it may your herte and myn
suffise!
And far now wel, for time is that ye
rise!—

But after - that they longe y - pleynéd
hadde,
And ofté kist, and streite in armés folde,
The day gan rise, and Troilus him
cladde, 1690
And rewfully his lady gan biholde
As he that felté dethés carés colde,

1688. *But, S γ And.*

And to her grace he gan him recomaunde.
Whe'r him was wo, this holde I no de-
maunde!

For mannés hed imaginén ne can,
N'entendément considere, or tongé telle
The cruel peynés of this woful man,
That passen every torment down in helle.
For whan he saw that shenemightédwelle,
Which that his soule out of his herté rente,
Withouté more out of the chaumbre he
wente. 1701

1696. *or, so J H₃; P β γ ne.*

1697. *woful, γ sorrowful.*

BOOK V

APROCHEN gan the fatal destiné
That Jovés hath in disposicioun,
And to you, angry Parcas, sustren thre,
Committeth to don execucioun:
For which Criseyde moste out of the toun,
And Troilus shal dwellen forth in pine
Til Lachesis his thred no lenger twine.

The gold-ytresséd Phebus heighe on-lofte
Thryés hadde allé, with his bemés shene,
The snowés molte, and Zephirus as ofte 10
Y-brought ayein the tendré levés grene,
Sin that the sone of Ecuba the quene
Bigan to love her first for whom his sorwe
Was al, that she departé sholde a-morwe.

Ful redy was at primé Diomedé,
Criseyde unto the Grekés ost to lede,
Forsorwe of which she felte her herté blede,
As she that n'isté what was best to rede.
And trewely, as men in bokés rede, 19
Men wisté neveré womman han the care,
Ne was so loth out of a town to fare.

This Troilus, withouten reed or lore,
As man that bath his joyés ek forlore,
Was wayting on his lady everé more

3. *Parcas, Fates.*

7. *Lachesis, one of the Fates.*

8. *gold-ytressed (?)*, all *gold(e)-tressed*.

9. *shene*, so H₂ H₄ R S. J P *clene*; Cx. H₃ γ *clere*.

As she that was the sothfast crop and more
Of al his lust or joyés her-bifore.
But Troilus! now far-wel al thy joye,
For shaltow neveré sen her eft in Troye!

Soth is, that whil he bood in this manére,
He gan his wo ful manly for to hide, 30
That wel unnethe it sene was in his chere;
But at the yaté ther she sholde out-ride,
With certein folk he hovéd her t'abide,
So wo-bigon, al wolde he naught him
pleyne,
That on his hors unnethe he sat for peyne.

For ire he quok, so gan his herté gnawe,
Whan Diomedé on horsé gan him dresse,
And seide unto himself this ilké sawe,
'Allas!' quod he, 'thus foul a wrecched-
nesse,

Why suffre ich it? Why n'il ich it re-
dresse? 40

Were it not bet at onés for to dye
Than everé more in langour thus to drye?

'Why n'il I make at onés riche and pore
To have y-nough to do or-that she go?
Why n'il I bringe al Troye upon a rore?
Why n'il I sleen this Diomedé also?
Why n'il I rather with a man or two
Stele her away? Why wol I this endure?
Why n'il I helpen to myn owné cure?'

But why he n'oldè don so fel a dede, 50
That shal I seyn, and why him liste it spare :
He hadde in herte alweyes a maner drede
Lest that Criseyde, in rumour of this fare,
Sholde han ben slayn : lo, this was al
his care.

And ellès, certain, as I seidè yore,
He hadde it don, withouten wordès more.

Criseydè, whan she redy was to ride,
Ful sorwfully shesightè, and seide, 'Allas !'
But forth shemot, for aught that may bitide :
Ther n'is non other rémedie in this cas ;
And forth she rit ful sorwfulliche a pas. 61
What wonder is though that her sorè smerte,
Whan she forgo'th her ownè derè herte ?

This Troilus, in wise of curteisye,
With hauke on honde, and with a hugè
route

Of knightès, rod and dide her companye,
Passing al the valèyè fer withoute ;
And ferther wolde han riden, out of doute,
Ful fayn ; and wo was him to gon so sone :
But torne he moste, and it was ek to done.

And right with that was Antenor y-come 71
Out of the Grekès ost ; and every wight
Was of it glad, and seide he was welcòme.
And Troilus, al n'ere his hertè light,
He peynèd him with al his fullè might
Him to with-holde of weping at the leste ;
And Antenor he kiste, and madè feste.

And therwithal he moste his levè take,
And caste his ye upon her pitously, 79
And neer he rod, his causè for to make,
To take her by the hond al sobrelly ;
And, Lord, so she gan wepen tendrelly !
And he ful softe and sleighly gan her seye,
'Now hold your day, and dome not to deye !'

With that his courser tornèd he aboute
With facè pale, and unto Diomede
No word he spak, ne non of al his route ;
Of which the sone of Tydèus took hede,

60, 61. So a ß S ; H₃ γ transpose ll. 60, 61.

63. *derè, γ swete*. (See iv. 1449.)

67. *valèyè* ; R *uallys* (read ? *The ualles alle*).
valèyè is a mistranslation of Boc. *vallo*, 'rampart.'

88. *sone of Tydèus*, Diomede.

As he that coudè morè than the crede 89
In swich a craft, and by the reyne her hente ;
And Troilus to Troye homwårde he wente.

This Diomede that led her by the bridel,
Whan that he saw the folk of Troye aweye,
Thoughte, 'Al my labour shal not ben
on ydel

If that I may, for somewhat shal I seye ;
For at the worsteit may yit shorte our weye.
I have herd seyð ek, timès twyès twelve,
"He is a fool that wol foryete himselve."

But nathèles thus thoughte he wel y-nough,
That 'certeinliche I am aboutè nought 100
If that I speke of love, or make it tough ;
For doutèles, if she have in her thought
Him that I gesse, he may not ben y-brought
So sone away ; but I shal finde a mene,
That she not wite as yit shal, what I mene.'

This Diomede, as he that coude his good,
Whan timè was, gan fallen forth in speche
Of this and that, and axèd why she stood
In swich disce, and gan her ek biseche 109
That if that he encessè mighte or eche
With any thing her esè, that she sholde
Comaunde it him, and seide he don it wolde.

For trewèliche he swor her, as a knight,
That ther n'as thing with which he mighte
her plese

That he n'il don his herte and al his might
To don it, for to don her herte an ese ;
And preyèd her, she wolde her sorwe
apese,

And seide, 'Y-wis, we Grekès can have
joye

T'honouren you, as wel as folk of Troye.'

He seide ek thus, 'I wot you thinketh
straunge,— 120

No wonder is, for it is to you newe,—
Th'aqueyntaunce of thise Trojans for to
chaunge

For folk of Greccè, that ye neverè knewe.

107. *Whan time was, γ Whan this was don*.

115. *n'il*, H₄ R S γ *n'olde*.

122. *Trojans* ; H₂ H₄ D *Trojanès*.

122. *for to*, so G Cx. ; J and others *to*.

But woldè neverè God but-if as trewe
A Grek ye sholde amonge us allè finde
As any Trojan is, and ek as kinde.

‘And by the cause I swor you right lo now
To be your frend, and helply to my might,
And for-that more acqueyntaunce ek of
yow 129

Haveich had than another straunger wight,
So fro this forth, I preye you, day and night,
Comaundeth me, how sorè that me smerte,
To don al that may like unto your herte ;

‘And that ye me wolde as your brother
tete,

And taketh not my frendship in despit ;
And, though your sorwes ben for thingès
grete,

N’ot I not why, but out of more respit
Myn herte hath for t’amende it gret delit ;
And if I may your harmès not redresse,
I am right sory for your hevinesse. 140

‘For though ye Trojans with us Grekès
wrothe

Ifan many a day ben, alwey yit, pardè,
Oo God of love in soth we serven bothe.
And, for the love of God, my lady free,
Whomsoyehate, as beth not wroth with me;
For trewely ther can no wight you serve,
That half so loth your wraththè wolde
deserve.

‘And n’ereit that we ben soneigh the tente
Of Calcas, which that sen us bothè may,
I wolde of this you telle al myn entente ; 150
But this’ enselèd til another day.
Yif me your hond : I am, and shal be ay,
God help me so, whil that my lif may dure,
Your owne, aboven every crèature !

‘Thus seide I nevere or now to womman
born ;

For, God myn herte as wisly gladè so,
I lovedè neverè womman her-biforn
As paramours, ne neverè shal no mo :
And for the love of God beth not my fo,
Al can I not to you, my lady dere, 160
Compleyne aright, for I am yit to lere.

‘And wondreth not, myn ownè lady bright,
Though that I speke of love to you thus
blive ;

For I have herd or this of mony a wight,
I hath lovèd thing he neverè say his live :
Nor I am not of powèr for to strive
Ayeins the God of Love, but him obeye
I wol alwèy ; and mercy I you preye.

‘Ther ben so worthy knightès in this place,
And ye so fair, that everich of them alle 170
Wol peynen him to stonden in your grace ;
But mightè me so fair a gracè falle,
That ye me for your servant woldè calle,
So lowly ne so trewely you serve
N’il non of hem, as I shal, til I sterve.’—

Criseyde unto that purpos lite answerde,
As she that was with sorwe oppressèd so,
That in effect she nought his talès herde
But here and there, now here a word or two,
Her thoughte her sorwful hertè brasta-two ;
For whan she gan her fader fer espye, 181
Wel neigh down off her hors she gan to sye.

But nathèles she thankèd Diomedè
Of al his travaille and his goodè chere,
And that him liste his frendship her to
bede ;

And she accepteth it in good manère,
And wol do fayn that is him lief and dere ;
And trusten him she wolde, and wel she
mighte,

As seidè she. And from her hors sh’
alighte. 189

Her fader hath her in his armès nome,
And twenty time he kiste his doughter
swete,
And seide, ‘O derè doughter myn, wel-
còme !’

She seide ek, she was fayn with him to mete,
And stood forth muwèt, milde, and man-
suète.—

But here I leve her with her fader dwelle,
And forth I wol of Troilus you telle.

To Troye is come this woful Troilus
In sorwe aboven allè sorwes smerte,

166. *Nor*, J II₄ H₃ ; S γ Ek ; rest *For*, *Nt*.

With felon look, and facé dispitous. 199
 Tho sodeinly down from his hors he sterte,
 And thorough his paleis with a swollen herte
 To chaumbré wente : of no wight took he
 hede,
 Ne non to him dar speke a word for drede.

And there his sorwes that he sparéd hadde
 He yaf an issue large, and Deth he cri'de ;
 And in his throwés frenétik and maddle
 He corseth Jove, Appollo, and ek Cupide,
 He corseth Ceres, Bacus, and Cipride,
 His burthe, himself, his fate, and ek natúre,
 And, save his lady, every créature. 210

To bedde he go'th, and walweth there and
 torneth
 In furie, as doth he, Ixion, in helle ;
 And in this wise he neigh til day sojorneth.
 But tho bigan his herte a lite unswelle
 Thorough terés, whiche that gonnun up to
 welle ;
 And pitously he cri'de upon Criseyde,
 And to himself right thus hespak and seyde :

' Where is myn owné lady, lief and dere ?
 Where is her whité brest ? Where is it,
 where ? 219
 Where ben her armés and her yén clere,
 That yesternight this timé with me were ?
 Now may I wepe alloné many a tere,
 And graspe aboute I may ; but in this place,
 Saving a pilwe, I findé naught t'enbrace.

' How shal I don ? Whan shal she come
 ayeeyn ?
 I not, allas ! Why let ich her to go ?
 As woldé God, ich hadde as tho ben slayn !
 O herté myn, Criseyde ! O sweté fo !
 O lady myn, that I love and no mo, 229
 To whom for everé mo myn herte I dowe !
 See how I deye, ye n'il me not rescowe !

' Whoseeth you now, my righté lodé-sterre ?
 Whosit right now or stant in your preséncé ?

211. *walweth*, so G H₄ Cx. ; J *whieleth* ;
 others *weyleth*.

212. *Ixion*. See *Æneid*, vi. 601.

223. *graspe*, H₄ A *grope*.

224. *Saving*, so R ; rest *Save*.

Who can confórten now your hertés werre ?
 Now I am gon, whom yeve ye audience ?
 Who spek'th for me right now in myn
 abséncé ?

Allas, no wight : and that is al my care ;
 For wel I wot, as yvele as I ye fare !

' How sholde I thustenday's ful endure, 239
 Whan I the firsté night have al this tene ?
 How shal she don ek, sorwful créature ?
 For tendrenesse how shal she ek sustene
 Swich wo for me ? O pitous, pale, and grene
 Shal ben your fresshé, wommanliché face
 For longing, or ye torne into this place !'

And whan he fil in any slombéringes,
 Anon biginne he sholdé for to grone,
 And dremen of the dredfullesté thinges
 That mighté ben : as, mete he were allone
 In place horriblé making ay his mone, 250
 Or meten that he was amongés alle
 His enemies and in hir hondés falle.

And therewithal his body sholdé sterte,
 And with the stert al sodeinly awake,
 And swich a tremour fele aboute his herte,
 That of the fere his body sholdé quake ;
 And therewithal he sholde a noisé make,
 And seme as though he sholdé fallé depe
 From heighe on-lofte : and than he woldé
 wepe,

And rewén on himself so pitously, 260
 That wonder was to here his fantasye.
 Another time he sholdé mightily
 Confórte himself, and seyn it was folýe
 So causéles swich dredé for to drye ;
 And eft biginne his aspré peynés newe,
 That every man mighte on his sorwes rewe.

Who couldé telle aright or ful discrive
 His wo, his pleynte, his langour, and his
 pine ?

Nought alle the men that han or ben on-live !
 Thou, rede, mayst thyself ful wel devine 270
 That swich a wo my wit can not define :

242. *ek*, R *γ* *this*.

245. *longing*, S *γ* *langour*.

265. *peynes*, so H₂ ; J and others *sorwes*.

270. *Thou, rede* ; see i. 52 (note). Chaucer
 seems now to be writing for publication.

On ydel for to write it sholde I swinke,
Whan that my wit is wery it to thinke !

On hevené yit the sterrés were y-sene,
Although ful pale y-woxen was the mone,
And whiten gan the orisonté shene
Al estward, as it wont is for to done,
And Phebus with his rosy carté sone
Gan after that to dresse him up to fare,
Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandaré. 280

This Pandar,—that of al the day biforn
Ne mighte han comén Troilus to see,
Although he on his hed it hadde y-sworn,
For with the king Priám alday was he,
So that it lay not in his libérté
No-wher to gon,—but on the morwe he
wente
To Troilus, whan that he for him sente.

For in his herte he coudé wel devine
That Troilus al night for sorwé wook ;
And that he woldé telle him of his pine, 290
This knew hewel y-nough, withouté book !
For-which to chaumbré streight the wey
he took,
And Troilus tho sobrelíche he grette,
And on the bed ful sone he gan him sette.

‘ My Pandarus,’ quod Troilus, ‘ the sorwe
Which that I drye, I may not longe endure :
I trowe I shal not liven til to-morwe ;
For-which I wolde alweys, on áventure,
To thee devisen of my sepulture
The forme ; and of my mocblé thou
dispone 300
Right as thee semeth best is for to done.

‘ But of the fir and flaumbé funeral
In which my body brennen shal to gledo,
And of the feste and pleyés palestral
At my vigíle, I preye thee, tak good hede
That that bewel ; and offré Mars mystede,
My swerd, myn helm ; and, levé brother
dere,
My sheld to Pallas yif, that shineth clere.

‘ The poudre in which myn herte y-brend
shal torne,

That preye I thee thou take, and ek
conserve 310

It in a vessel, that men clep’th an urne,
Of gold ; and to my lady that I serve,
For love of whom thus pitousliche I serve,
So yive it her, and do me this plesáunce
To preye her kepe it for a rémembraunce.

‘ For wel I felé, by my malaðye
And by my dremés now and yore ago,
Al certeinly that I mot nedés dye :
The owle eek, which that hight Escaphilo,
Hath after me shríght alle these nightés
two. 320
And, God Mercúrie, of me now woful
wrecche
The soulé gide, and, whan thee list, it
fecche !’—

Pandaré answérde and seicð, ‘ Troilus,
My deré frend, as I have told thee yore,
That it is folý for to sorwen thus,
And causèles, for-which I can no more ;
But who-so wol not trowén red ne lore,
I can not sen in him no remedye
But lete him worthen with his fantasye.

‘ But Troilus, I preye thee, tel me now 330
If-that thou trowe, or this, that any wíght
Hath lovéd paramours as wel as thou ?
Ye, God wot ! And ful many a worthy
knight
Hath his lady forgon a fourténíght,
And he not yit made halvendel the fare !
What nede is thee to maken al this care ?

‘ Sin day by day thou mayst thy-selven see
That from his love, or ellés from his wíf,
A man mot twinnen of necessité,
Ye, though he love her as his owné lif ; 340
Yit n’íl he with himself thus maken strif :
For wel thou wost, my levé brother dere,
That alwey frendés may not ben i-fere.

310. *ek*, so G ; J and others *it*.

311. *It in* (?), all *In*.

319. *Escaphilo*, Ascalaphus, whom Proserpine changed into an owl. See Ovid, *Mét.* v. 539.

333. *ful*, so P R ; G *so* ; rest *fro* (A *for*).

334. *forgon*, so P R G ; Cx. *ben gon* ; A *gon yee* ; rest *gon*.

'How don this folk that seen hir lovès
wedded

By frendès might, as it bitit ful ofte,
And seen hem in hirsousesbed y-bedded?
God wot, they take it wisly, faire, and softe,
For-why good hope halt up hir herte on-
lofte ;

And, for they can a time of sorwe endure,
Astime hem hurt, a timèdoth hem cure ! 350

'So sholdestow endure and leten slide
The time, and fondè to be glad and light !
Ten dayès n'is so longè nought t'abide !
And sin she thee to comen hath bihight,
She n'il her hestè breken for no wight ;
For dred thee nought that she n'il finden
weye

To come ayein, my lif that dorste I leye !

'Thy swevenès ek and al swich fantasye
Drif out, and lat hem faren to mischaunce ;
For they procede of thy maléncolye, 360
Thatdoththeefeleslepeal thispenaunce.
A straw for allè swevenès signefiaunce !
God help me so, I counte hem nought a
bene !

Ther wot no man aright what dremès mene !

'For prestès of the temple tellen this,
That dremès ben the revelaciouns
Of Goddès ; and as wel they telle, y-wis,
That they ben infernals illusiouns ;
And lechès scyn, that of complexiouns
Proceden they, or fast, or glotonye ; 370
Who wot in soth thus what they signéfyc?

'Ek othré seyn that thorough impressiouns,
As, if a wight hath faste a thing in minde,
That therof comen swiche avisouns ;
And othré seyn, that they in bookès finde,
That, after timès of the yeer, by kinde
Men dreme, and that th'effect go'th by
the mone :
But lef no drem, for it is nought to done !

'Wel worth of dremès ay thise oldè wives,
And trewèlichekaugurie of thisefoules 380
For fere of which men wenen lese hir lives,

362. *signefiaunce*, so J G A ; rest *signifiaunce*.

As ravenès qualm, or shriking of thise
oules !

To trowen on it bothè fals and foul is :
Allas, allas, so noble a créature
As is a man shal dreden swich ordure !

'For-which withal myn herte I thee biseche,
Unto thyself that al this thou foryive :
And ris now up withoutè morè speche,
And lat uscastehow forth may best be drive
This time, and ek how freshly we may
live 390
Whan that she com'th, the whiche shal be
right sone :
God help me so, thy beste is thus to done.

'Ris, lat us speke of lusty lif in Troye
That we han lad, and forth the timè drive,
And eek of timè coming us rejoye,
That bringen shal our blissè now so blive ;
And langour of thise twyès dayès five
We shal therwith so fórycte or oppresse,
That wel unnethe it don shal us duresse.

'This town is ful of lordès al aboute, 400
And trewès lasten al this menè while :
Go we and pleye us in som lusty route
To Sarpedoun, not hennès but a mile :
And thus thou shalt the timè wel bigile,
And drive it forth unto that blisful morwe
That thou her see, that cause is of thy sorwe.

'Now ris, my derè brother Troilus :
For certès, it non honour is to thee
To wepe, and in thy bed to rouken thus ;
For trewèliche of oo thing trustè me, 410
If thou thus ligge a day or two or thre,
The folk wol seyn that thou for cowardise
Thee feynest sik, and that thou darst
not rise !'—

This Troilus answerde, 'O brother dere,
This knowèn folk that hany-suffred payne,
That, though he wepe and makè sorwful
chere

398. *or*, so P R H₄ H₃ ; rest *our(e)*.

402. *and*, so R S ; rest omit.

403. *Sarpedoun*. See iv. 52.

409. *rouken*, so Cx. Th. ; J and others *iouken*.

(See *Can't. Tales*, A 1308.)

412. *seyn*, S γ *wene*. (Boc. diria l' uom.)

That feleth harmand smert in every veyne,
No wonderis; and, though ich everè pleyne
Or alwey wepe, I n'am no thing to blame,
Sin I have lost the cause of al my game.

'But sin of finè force I mot arise, 421
I shal arise as sone as evere I may;
And God, to whom my herte I sacrificse,
So sende us hastily the tenthè day!
For was ther neverè fowl so fayn of May
As I shal ben, whan that she com'th to

Troye

That cause is of my torment and my joye.

'But whider is thy red,' quod Troilus,
'That we may pleye us best in al this toun?'
'By God, my conseil is,' quod Pandarus,
'To ride and pleye us with King
Sarpedoun.' 431

So longe of this they spaken up and down,
Til Troilus gan at the laste assente
To rise, and forth to Sarpedoun they wente.

This Sarpedoun, as he that honorable
Wasever his live, and ful of heigh largesse,
With al that mighte y-servèd ben on table
That deynté was, al coste it gret richesse,
He fedde hem day by day; that swich
noblesse, 439

Asseyden bothe the meste and ek the leste,
Was nevere or that day wist at any feste.

Nor in this world ther is non instrument
Delicious through wind, ortouche of corde,
As fer as any wight hath everè went,
That tongè telle or hertè may recorde,
That at the feste it n'as wel herd acorde;
N'of ladies ek so fair a companye
Ondaunce, or tho, was neverè seyn with ye.

But what availeth this to Troilus, 449
That for his sorwè nothing of it roughte?
For evere in oon his hertè pietus
Ful bisily Criseyde his lady soughte:
On her wasevere al that his hertè thoughte,

421. *sin of fine force*; var. *sith(en), sin, of fors* (reading? *sith in sin of fors*). Rawl. has two leaves wanting (ll. 421-560).

436. *largesse*, S γ *pruovever*.

443. *of*, so P H₂ H₄ Cx. A Cp.; H₃ S H₁ S₂ on; J G D Cl. *or*.

Now this, now that, so faste imagininge,
That glade, y-wis, can him no festeyninge.

Thise ladies ek that at the festè ben,
Sin that he saw his lady was aweye,
It was his sorwe upon hem for to sen,
Or for to here on instrument so pleye: 459
For she that of his hertè ber'th the keye
Was absent, lo, this was his fantasye,
That no wight sholdè maken melodye.

Nor ther n'as houre of al the day or night,
Whan he was there-as no wight mighte
him here,

That he ne seide, 'O lufsom lady bright,
How have ye faren sin that ye were here?
Welcome, y-wis, myn ownè lady dere!'
But weylawey, al this n'as but a masc:
Fortune his howve intendeth bet to glase!

The lettres ek that she of oldè time 470
Hadde him y-sent, he wolde allonè rede
An hundred sithe a-twixen noon and
prime,

Refiguring her shap, her wommanhede,
Withinne his herte, and every word or dede
That passèd was. And thus he drof t'an
ende

The ferthè day; and thennés wolde he
wende,

And seidè, 'Levè brother Pandarus,
Intendestow that we shal herè bleve
Til Sarpedoun wil forth congéyèn us? 479
Yit were it fairer that we toke our leve.
For Goddès love, lat us now sone at eve
Our levè take, and homward lat us tornè,
For trewèliche I n'il not thus sojorne!'

Pandàre answeárdè, 'Be we comen hider
To fecchen fir, and rennen hom ayeyn?
God help me so, I can not tellen whider
We mightè gon, if I shal sothly seyn,
Ther any wight is of us morè fayn
Than Sarpedoun. And if we hennès hyc
Thus sodeinly, I holde it vilanye, 490

455. *festeyninge*, so J S only; rest *festeyng*, *festyng(e)*, *festenyng(e)*. (See iii. 1718.)

476. *thennes wolde he*, so J P G H₃; Cx. corrupt; rest *seyde (S that) he wolde*.

478. *bleve*, so J S D Cp. H Cl.; rest *bileve*.

'Sin that we seiden that we woldé bleve
With hima wowke; and now thus sodeinly
The ferthé day to take of him our leve,
He woldé wondren on it trewely.
Lat us forth holde our purpos fermely,
And sin that we bihighten him to bide,
Hold forward now, and after lat us ride.'

Thus Pandarus with allé peyne and wo
Made him to dwelle; and at the wikés
ende,
Of Sarpedoun they toke hir levé tho, 500
And on hir wey they spedden hem to wende.
Quod Troilus, 'Now Lord me gracé sende,
That I may finden at myn hom-cominge
Criseyde come!' and ther-with gan he
singe.

'Ye, haselwodé!' thoughté this Pandaré,
And to himself ful softéliche he seyde,
'God wot, refreyden may this hoté fare
Or Calcas sendé Troilus Criseyde!' 508
But natheles he japed thus, and pley'de,
And swor, y-wis, his herte him wel bihighte
She woldé come as sone as evere she mighte.

Whan they unto the paleis were y-comen
Of Troilus, they down off horse alighte,
And to the chaumbre hir wey than han
they nomen;
And into timé that it gan to nighte
They gonné 'speken of Criseyde the
brighte;
And after this, whan that hem bothé leste,
They spedde hem fro the soper unto reste.

On morwe, as sone as day bigan to clere,
This Troilus gan of his slep t'abreyde, 520
And to Pandaré, his owné brother dere,
'For love of God,' ful pitousliche he seyde,
'As go we sen the paleis of Criseyde:
For sin we yit may han no moré feste,
So lat us sen her paleis at the leste!'

495. *forth holde*, so Cx.; S γ *holde(n) forth*;
rest *holde*.

496. *we*, so J G S A; H₃ *he*; rest *ye*.

509. *pley'de*, so H₃ H₄; J and others *seyde*.

516. *gonne*, so J; rest omit.

521. *Pandare*; J G H₃ *Pandarus*.

523. *As*, Cl. *So*; J G P omit.

And therwithal, his meyné for to blende,
A cause he fond in towné for to go,
And to Criseydes hous they gonné wende.
But, Lord, this sely Troilus was wo! 529
Him thoughte his sorwful herté brasta-two;
For, whan he saw her dorés speréd alle,
Wel nigh for sorwe adown he gan to falle.

Therwith whan he was war and gan
biholde
How shet was every window of the place,
As frost, him thoughte, his herté gan to
colde;
For-which with chaungéd dedlich palé face,
Withouten word he forth-by gan to pace;
And, as God wolde, he gan so fasté ride,
That no wight of his contenance espi'de.

Than seide he thus: 'O paleis desolat,
O hous, of houses whilom best y-hight,
O paleis empty and disconsolat,
O thou lanterné of which queynt is the
light,
O paleis, whilom day that now art night,
Wel oughtestow to falle, and I to dye,
Sin she is went that wont was us to gye!

'O paleis, whilom crowne of houses alle,
Enluminéd with sonne of allé blisse!
O ring, fro which the ruby is out-falle,
O cause of wo, that cause hast been of
lisse! 550
Vit, sin I may no bet, fayn wolde I kisse
Thy coldé dorés, dorste I for this route:
And far-wel shrine, of which the seynt is
oute!'

Ther-with he caste on Pandarus his ye,
With chaungéd face, and pitous to bi-
holde;
And, whan hemighte his time aright espye,
Ay as he rod, to Pandarus he tolde
His newé sorwe and ek his joyés olde
So pitously, and with so ded an hewe,
That every wight mighte on his sorwe
rewe. 560

Fro thennésforth he rideth up and down,
And everything com him to remembrance

550. *hast*, J G *hath*.

550. *lisse*, so J Cx. S Cp.; H₂ *hisse*; rest *blisse*.

As he rod for-by places of the town
In which he whilom hadde al his ples-
aunce.

'Lo, yonder saw I last my lady daunce !
And in that temple with her yen clere
Me caughte first my righte lady dere !

'And yonder have ich herd ful lustily
My deré herté laughe ! And yonder pleye
Saw I her onés ek ful bisily ! 570
And yonder onés to me gan she seye,
"Now goodé sweté, love me wel, I
preye !"

And yond so goodly gan she me biholde,
That to the deth myn herte is to her holde !

'And at that corner in the yonder hous
Herde I myn alderlevest lady dere
So wommanly with vois melodious
Singen so wel, so goodly and so clere,
That in my soule yit me think'th ich here
The blisful soun ! And in that yonder
place 580
My lady first me took unto her grace !'

Than thoughte he thus : 'O blisful Lord
Cupide,
Whan I the proces have in my memórie,
How thou me hast werréy'd on every
side,
Men mighte a book make of it, lik a
storie !
What nede is thee to seke on me victóric,
Sin I am thyn, and hoolly at thy wille ?
What joye hast thou thine owné folk to
spille ?

'Wel hastow, Lord, y-wroke on me thyn
ire,
Thou mighty God, and dredful for to
greve ! 590
Now mercy, Lord ! Thou wost wel I desire
Thy gracé most of allé lustés leve,
And live and deye I wol in thy bileve :
For which I n'axe in guerdon but oo bone,
That thou Criseyde ayein me sendé sone.

565. S γ read : *Lo, yonder* (Cl. *yende*) saw I
myn owne lady daunce.

570. *bisily*, so P G H₃ R Cx. ; rest *blisfully*.

583. *my*, P H₄ Cx. S γ omit.

'Distreyne her herte as fasté to retorne
As thou dost myn to longen her to see :
Than wot I wel that she n'il not sojorne.
Now, blisful Lord, so cruel thou ne be
Unto the blood of Troye, I preyé thee, 600
As Juno was unto the blood Thebáne,
For which the folk of Thebés caughte hir
bane !'

And after this he to the yatés wente
Ther-as Criseyde out-rod a ful good pas ;
And up and down ther made he many a
wente,

And to himself ful ofte he seide, 'Allas !
From hennés rod my blis and my solás !
As woldé blisful God now for his joye,
I mighte her sen ayein come into Troye !

'And to the yonder hil I gan her gide, 610
Allas, and there I took of her my leve !
And yond I saw her to her fader ride,
For sorwe of which myn herté wol to-cleve !
And hider hom I com whan it was eve ;
And here I dwelle out-cast from allé joye,
And shal, til I may sen her eft in Troye !'

And of himself imaginéd he ofte
To ben defet and pale, and waxen lesse
Than he was wont ; and that men seiden
softe,

'What may it be ? Who can the sothé
gesse, 620

Why Troilus hath al this hevinessé ?'
And al this n'as but his maléncolye,
That he hadde of himself swich fantasye.

Another time imaginen he wolde
That every wight that wenté by the weye
Had of him routhé, and that they seyén
sholde,

'I am right sory Troilus wol deye.' 627
And thus he drof a day yit forth or tweye
As ye han herd : swich lif right gan he lede
As he that stood bitwixen hope and drede.

For-which him likéd in his songés shewe
Th'encheson of his wo as he best mighte,

598. *not*, J so (read ? *Than wot I wel she n'il
not so sojorne*).

628. *yit*, J P G H₃ R H₄ omit.

629. *right*, J P G Cx. omit.

And make a song of wordés but a fewé,
Somwhat his woful herté for to lighte ;
And whan he was from every mannés
 sighté,
With softé vois he of his lady dere
That absent was gan singe as ye may here :

‘O sterre, of which I lost have al the
 light,
With herté soor wel oughte I to biwaile
That everé derk in torment night by
 night, 640
Toward my deth with wind in stere I
 saile :

For-which the tenthé night if-that I faile
The giding of thy bemés brighte an houre,
My ship and me Caribdis wol devoure.’

This song whan he thus songen haddé, sone
He fil ayein into his sikés olde ;
And every night, as he was wont to done,
He stood the brighté moné to biholde,
And al his sorwe he to the moné tolde,
And seide, ‘Y-wis, whan thou art hornéd
 newe, 650
I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe !

‘I saw thy hornés oldé by the morwe
Whan hennés rod my righté lady dere,
That cause is of my torment and mysorwe :
For-which, O brighté Lúcina the clere,
For love of God, ren faste aboute thyspere !
For, whan thy hornés newé ginné springe,
Than shal she come that may my blisse
 bringe !’

The dayés more and lenger every night
Than thy ben wont to ben, him thoughté
 tho ; 660
And that the sonnè wente his cours unright
By lenger wey than it was wont to go ;
And seide, ‘Y-wis, me dredeth everé mo
The sonnés soné Pheton be on-live,
And that his fader carte amis he drive.’

Upon the wallés faste ek wolde he walke,
And on the Grekés oost he woldé see,

655. *Lúcina*, so Cx. Th.; J and others *La-
thóna*. See iv. 1591.

664. *Pheton*, Phaeton. See *H. F.* 942.

And to himself right thus he woldé talke,
‘Lo, yonder is myn owné lady free !
Or ellés yonder ther the tentés be ! 670
And thennés com’th thiseir that is soswote,
That in my soule I fele it doth me bote !

‘And, hardily, this wind, that more and more
Thus stoundémele encresseth in my face,
Is of my lady’s depé sikés sore !
I preve it thus, for in non other space
Of al this town, save only in this place,
Fele I no wind that souneth so lik peyne :
It seith, “Allas ! why twinnéd be we
 tweyne ?”’

This longé time he driveth forth right thus,
Til fully passéd was the ninthé night ; 681
And ay biside him was this Pandarus,
That bisily dide al his fullé might
Him to confórte and make his herté light,
Yiving him hope alwéy, the tenthé morwe
That she shal come and stinten al his sorwe.

—Upon that other sidé was Criseyde,
With women fewe, among the Grekés
 stronge :

For-which ful ofte a day ‘Allas !’ she seyde,
‘That I was born ! Wel may myn herté
 longe 690
After my deth, for now live I too longe !
Allas, and I ne may it not amende,
For now is wors than everé yit I wen’de !

‘My fader n’il for no thing do me grace
To gon ayein, for aught I can him quemen;
And, if so be that I my termé pace,
My Troilus shal in his herté deme
That I am fals ; and so it may wel seme :
Thus shal I have unthank on every side,
That I was born, so weylawey the tide ! 700

‘And if that I me putte in jupartye
To stele away by night, and it bifalle
That I be caught, I shal be holde espye :
Or ellés, lo, this drede I most of alle,
If in the hondés of som wrecche I falle.
I n’am but lost, al be myn herté trewe !
Now mighty God, thou on mysorwé rewe !’

695. *aught*, J and others *naught*.

Ful pale y-waxen was her brighte face,
Her limés lene, as she that al the day
Stood whan she dorste, and lokéd on the
place 710

Ther she was born and ther she dwelt
had ay;
And al the night wepinge, allas, she lay.
And thus despeired out of allé cure,
She ledde her lif, this woful créature.

Ful ofte a day she sighte ek for distresse,
And in herself she wente ay pörtreyinge
Of Troilus the greté worthinesse,
And alle his goodly wordés récordinge
Sin first that day her love bigan tospringe:
And thus she sette her woful herte a-fire 720
Thurgh réembraunce of that she gan
desire.

In al this world ther n'is so cruel herte
That her had herd compleynen in her
sorwe,
That n'olde han wepen for her peynés
smerte,
So tendrely she wep bothe eve and morwe:
Her nedédé no terés for to borwe.
And this was yet the worste of al her peyne,
Ther was no wight to whom she dorste
her pleyne.

Ful rewfully she lokéd upon Troye, 729
Biheld the tourés heighe and ek the halles:
'Allas!' quod she, 'the plesaunce and the
joye,
The whiche that nowal tornéd into galle is,
Have ich had ofte withinne tho yonder
walles!
O Troilus, what dostow now?' she seyde:
'Lord, whether thou yit thenke upon
Criseyde!

'Allas, I n'hadde y-trowéd on your lore,
And went with you, as ye me redde or this!
Than hadde I now not sikéd half so sore!
Who mighte have said that I had don amis
To stele away with swich oon as he is? 740
But al too laté com'th the letuárie
Whan men the cors unto the gravé carie!

'Too late is now to speke of that matere:
Prudence, allas! oon of thine yen three
Me lakkéd alwey or-that I com here!
On timé passéd wel remembered me,
And present time ek coude ich wel y-see,
But futur time, or I was in the snare,
Coude I not see: that causeth now my care!

'But nathéles, bitidé what bitide, 750
I shal tomorwe at night, by est or west,
Out of this oost stele on som maner side,
And gon with Troilus wher-as him lest:
This purpos wol I holde, and this is best.
No fors of wikked tongés janglerye,
For evere on love han wrecches had envye!

'For who-so wol of every word take hede,
Or rulen him by every wightés wit,
Ne shal he neveré thriven, out of drede;
For that that some men blamen everé yit,
Lo, other maner folk comenden it. 761
And as for me, for al swich variaunce,
Felicité clepe I my suffisaunce!

'For-which, withouten any wordés mo,
To Troye I wol, as for conclusioun.'—
But God it wot, or fully monthés two,
She was ful fer fro that entencioun!
For bothé Troilus and Troyés toun
Shal knottéles throughout her herté slide;
For she wol take a purpos for t'abide. 770

—This Diomede, of whom you telle I gan,
Go'th now, withinne himself ay arguinge
Withal thesleighte and al that evere he can,
How he may best with shortest taryinge
Into his net Criseydes herté bringe.
To this entente he coude neveré fine:
To fisshen her, he leyde out hook and line.

But nathéles wel in his herte he thoughte,
That she n'as not withoute a love in Troye;
For neveré sithen he her thennés broughté
Ne coude he sen her laughe and maken
joye. 781
He n'iste how best her herté for t'acoye;
But 'for t'assaye,' he seide, 'it nought ne
greveth,
For he that nought n'assayeth, naught
n'acheveth!'

725. *wep* (?), all *wefte*.752. *on*, *J* and others *in*.

Vit seide he to himself upon a night,
 'Now am I not a fool, that wot wel how
 Her wo for love is of another wight;
 And her-upon to gon assaye her now,
 I may wel wite, it n'il not ben my prow.
 For wisé folk in bokés it expresse, ⁷⁹⁰
 "Menshal not wowe a wight in hevinesse."

'But who-so mighté winnen swich a flour
 From him for whom she morneth night
 and day,
 He mighté seyn he were a conquerour!
 And right anon, as he that bold was ay,
 Thoughte in his herté, 'I happe how happé
 may,
 Al sholde I deye, I wol her herté secche:
 I shal no moré lesé but my speche!'

This Diomedé, as bokés us declare,
 Was in his nedés prest and corageus, ⁸⁰⁰
 With sterné vois and mighty limés square,
 Hardy and testif, strong and chivalrus
 Of dedés, lik his fader Tidéus;
 And some men seyn he was of tongé large,
 And heir he was of Calidoyné and Arge.

Criseyde mené was of her stature,
 Therto of shap, of face, and ek of chere
 Ther mighté be no fairer créature:
 And ofté timé this was her manére
 To gon y-tresséd with her herés clere ⁸¹⁰
 Down by her coler at her bak bihinde,
 Whiche with á thred of gold she wolde
 binde:

And, save her browés joinédén i-fere,
 Ther nas no lak in aught I can espyen.
 But for to speken of her yén clere,
 I.o, trewely, they writen that her syen,
 That Paradys stood forméd in her yén;
 And with her riché beauté everé more
 Strof love in her ay, which of hem was
 more. ⁸¹⁹

She sobré was, ek simple and wis withal,
 The best y-norisschéd ek that mighté be,

^{799-840.} Much of this passage seems to have been taken direct from Benoît de Sainte More, *Roman de Troie*. It is remarkable that in these six stanzas there should be six defective or doubtful lines.

^{802.} *and testif*, so S; rest *testif*.

And goodlich of her speche in general,
 And charitable, estatly, lusty, free:
 Ne neveré mo ne lakkéd piété
 Her tendré herté, sliding of corage.
 But trewely I can not telle her age.

And Troilus wel waxen was on highte,
 And complet forméd by proporcioun
 Sowel that kinde it nought amendé mighte:
 Yong, fressh, and strong, and hardy as
 lioun, ⁸³⁰

And trewe as steel in ech condicioun:
 And oon the best entecchéd créature
 That is, or shal, whil-that the world may
 dure.

And certainliche in storie it is y-founde
 That Troilus was neveré unto no wight,
 As in his time, in no degré secoúnde
 In durring don that longeth to a knight.
 Al mighte a geaunt passen him of might,
 His herte ay with the firste and with the
 beste ⁸³⁹
 Stood pargal to durre-don that him leste.

— But for to tellen forth of Diomedé.
 It fil that after, on the tenthé day
 Sin that Criseyde out of the cité yede,
 This Diomedé, as fressh as braunche in
 May,
 Com to the tenté ther-as Calcas lay,
 And feynéd him with Calcas han to done:
 But what he mente, I shal you tellé sone.

Criseyde, at shorté wordés for to telle,
 Welcoméd him, and down him by hersette;
 And he was ethe y-nough to maken dwelle!
 And after this, withouté longé lette ⁸⁵¹
 The spices and the wyn men forth hemfette;

^{823.} *And charitable* (?), all *Charitable*; P and (before *estatly*): H₁ G H₃ R Cx. A D H₁ Cl. and (before *frer*): P R *estatly*; J etc. *esta(t)li(s)ch(e)*.
^{824.} *lakkéd piété* (?), all *lakkéd(e) her pite (pète)*. (See iii. 1033; iv. 246; v. 1598.)

^{825.} *Her tendre herte* (?), G *tendyr herte*; P *Tendre hertis*; H₃ *Thendere hertede*; rest *Tendre herted*.

^{830.} *And strong*, so S; rest *strong*.

^{831.} *And trewe* (?), all *Trewe*.

^{832.} *And oon the* (?), H₁ *Oon the*; rest *Oon of the*.

^{842.} This line follows l. 770 in Boccaccio, who makes it the *fourth* day.

And forth they speke of this and that i-fere
As frendes don, of which som shal ye here.

He gan first fallen of the werre in speche
Bitwixe hem and the folk of Troye toun ;
And of th'assege he gan her ek hiseche
To telle him what was her opinioun.
Fro that demaunde he so descendeth doun
To axen her, if that her straungé thoughte
The Grekés gise, and werkés that they
wroughte ; 861

And why her fader tarieth so longe
To wedden her unto som worthy wight.—
Criseyde, that was in her peynés stronge
For love of Troilus, her owné knight,
As ferforth as she conning hadde or might
Answérde him tho ; but, as of his entente,
It seméd not she wisté what he mente.

But natheles this ilké Diomedé
Gan in himself assure, and thus he seyde :
' If ich aright have taken of you hede, 871
Me thinketh thus, O lady myn Criseyde,
That, sin I first hond on your bridel leyde
Whan ye out-come of Troyé by the morwe,
Ne coude I neveré sen you but in sorwe.

' Can I not seyn what may the causé be,
But-if for love of som Troján it were ;
The whiche right soré wolde athinken me,
That ye for any wight that dwelleth there
Sholde everé spille a quarter of a tere, 880
Or pitously yourselfen so bigile :
For dredéles it is not worth the while.

' The folk of Troye, as who seith, alle and
some

In prison ben, as ye yourselfen see ;
Nor thennés shal not oon on-live come
For al the gold atwixen sonne and sea :
Trusteth right wel and understondeth me,
Ther shal not oon to mercy gon on-live,
Al were he lord of worldés twyés five !

' Swich wreche on hem for fecching of
Eleyne 890
Ther shal ben take or-that we hennés
wende,

880. *Sholde evere* (?), all *Sholden*.

887. *right wel*, so Cx. S ; rest *wel*.

That Manés, whiche that Goddés ben of
peyne,

Shal benagast that Grekés wol hemshende,
And men shul drede, unto the worldés ende,
From hennésforth to ravissshén any quene,
So cruel shal our wreche on hem be sene !

' And but-if Calcas lede us with ambáges,
That is to seyn, with doublé wordés slye,
Swichas men clepe a word with two viságes,
Ye shal wel knowén that I nought ne lye,
And al this thing right sen it with your ye,
And that anon, ye n'il not trowe how
sone ! 902

Now taketh hedé, for it is to done !

' What ! Wené ye your wisé fader wolde
Have yeven Antenor for you anon,
If he ne wisté that the cité sholde
Destroyéd ben ? Why, nay, so mote I gon !
He knew ful wel ther shal not scapen oon
That Trojan is, and for the greté fere
He dursté not ye dwelté lenger there. 910

' What wol ye moré, lufsom lady dere ?
Lat Troye and Trojan fro your herté pace !
Drif out that bittré hope, and mak good
chere,

And clepe ayein the beauté of your face
That ye with salté terés so deface,
For Troye is brought in swich a jupartye
That it to save is now no remedye !

' And thenketh wel, yeshal in Grekés finde
A moré parfit love, or it be night,
Than any Trojan is, and moré kinde, 920
And bet to serven you wol don his might ;
And if ye vouchésauf, my lady bright,
I wol ben he to serven you myselve,
Ye, leveré than be king of Grecés twelve !'

And with that word he gan to waxen red,
And in his speche a litel wight he quook,
And caste aside a litel wight his hed,
And stinte a while. And afterward he
wook,

895. *ravissshén*, pronounce *rav'sshén*. (See *norissshéd*, l. 821.)

903. *to*, so Cx. ; H₄ *now to* ; G *not to* ; J and others *for to*.

928. *he wook*, J and others *awook*.

And sobrelieche on her he threw his look, 929
And seide, 'I am, al be it you no joye,
'As gentil man as any wight in Troye.

'For if my fader Tyd'us,' he seyde,
'Y-livéd hadde, ich haddé ben, or this,
Of Calidoyne and Arge a king, Criseyde !
And so hope I that I shal yit, ywis !
But he was slayn, alas, the more harm is,
Unhappily at Thebés al too rathe,
Polymites and many a man to scathe.

'But, herté myn, sin that I am your man, 939
And ye the firste of whom I sechê grace
To servê you as hertly as I can,
And everé shal whil I to live have space,
So, or that I departe out of this place,
That ye me graunté that I may tomorwe
At bettrê leiser tellê you my sorwe !'

What sholde I telle his wordés that he
seyde ?

He spak y-nough for oo day at the meste !
It preveth wel, he spak so that Criseyde
Granted him on the morwe at his requeste
To have a spechê with her at the leste, 950
So that he n'oldê speke of swich matere :
And thus to him she seide, as ye may here,

As she that hadde her herte on Troilus
So fastê, that ther may it non arace ;
And straungely she spak, and seidê thus :
'O Diomedê, I love that ilkê place
Ther I was born ! And Jovés for his grace
Delivere it sone of al that doth it care !
God, for thy might, so leve it wel to fare !

'That Grekês wolde hir wraththe on Troyê
wreke 960

If that they mighte, I knowe it wel, y-wis :
But it shal not bifallen as ye speke,
And God to-forn ! And fêrther over this,
I wot my fader wis and redy is ;

938. *Polymites*, Polynices. (See ll. 1488, 1507, and l. 1498 note.)

940. *ye the*, so Cx : P *ye be* ; H ; *bethe the* ; rest *ben the*.

944. *That ye*, S y *Ye wot*.

949. *him*, so Cx ; rest omit.

950. *To have a speche with her*, so Cx ; rest *For to speken with him*.

And that he me hath bought, as ye me
tolde,
So dere, I am the more unto him holde.

'That Grekês ben of heigh condicioun
I wot ek wel ; but, certein, men shal finde
As worthy folk withinnê Troyê toun, 969
As conning, and as parfit, and as kinde,
As ben bitwixen Orcadês and Inde ;
And that ye couldê wel your lady serve,
It trowe it wel, her thank for to deserve.

'But as to speke of love, y-wis,' she seyde,
'I hadde a lord, to whom I wedded was,
The whos myn herte al was til that he
deyde ;
And other love, as help me now Pallas,
Ther in myn hertê n'is, ne neveré was.
And that ye ben of noble and heigh kinréde,
I have wel herd it tellen, out of drede ; 980

'And that doth me to han so gret a wonder,
That ye wol scornen any woman so !
Ek, God wot, love and I be fer asonder :
I am disposed bet, so mote I go,
Unto my deth to pleyne and maken wo :
What I shal after don, can I not seye ;
But trowêliche, as yit, me list not pleye.

'Myn herte is now in tribulacioun,
And ye in armês bisy day by day : 989
Herafter, whan ye wonnen han the toun,
Paraunter thannê so it happen may,
That whan I see that neveré yit I say,
Than wol I werkê that I neveré wroughte !
This word to you y-nough suffisen oughte.

'To-morwe ek wol I speken with you fayn,
So that ye touchen nought of this matere ;
And whan you list, ye may come here aye yn.
And, or yegon, thus muche I seye you here :
As help me Pallas with her herês clere, 995
If that I sholde on any Grek han routhe,
It sholdê be yourselven, by my trouthe !

'I sey not therfor that I wol you love,
N'I sey not nay ; but in conclusioun,
I menê wel, by God that sit above !'

992. *nevere yit I*, so Cx. P H4 ; J I *nevere yit* ; others I *never(er)*, etc.

And therewithal she caste her yen doun,
And gan to sike, and seide, 'O Troyé toun,
Yit bidde I God, in quiete and in reste
I may thee sen, or do myn herté breste !'

But in effect, and shortly for to seye,
This Diomedé al fresshly newe aycyn 1010
Gan pressen on, and faste her mercy preye ;
And after this, the sothé for to scyn,
Herglove he took, of which he was ful fayn :
And finally, whan it was waxen eve,
And al was wel, he roos and took his leve.

The brighté Venus folwed and ay taughte
The wey ther brodé Phebus doun alighte,
And Cynthea her char-hors over-raughte
To whirle out of the Leoun, if she mighte,
And Signifer his candels sheweth brighte,
Whan that Criseyde unto her resté wente
Inwith her fadres fairé brighté tente, 1022

Retorning in her soule ay up and doun
The wordés of this sodein Diomedé,
His grete estat, and peril of the toun,
And that she was allone and haddé nede
Of frendés help. And thus bigan to brede
The causes why, the sothé for to telle,
That she took fully purpos for to dwelle.

The morwé com, and gostly for to speke
This Diomedé is come unto Criseyde ; 1031
And, shortly, lest that ye my talé breke,
So wel he for himselven spak and seyde,
That alle her sikés sore adoun he leyde ;
And finally, the sothé for to seyne,
He refte her of the grete of al her peyne.

And after this the storie telleth us
That she him yaf the fairé bayé stede

1019. See Cressida's promise, iv. 1592, and v.

1190.

1020. *Signifer*, the Zodiac.

1021. *reste*, H₃ S y *bed(ite)*; H₄ *chambir*.

1028. *causes*, so J P G (Boc.); *rest cause*.

1030. *gostly*, as her spiritual adviser.

1037. The incidents in the two following stanzas seem to have been taken from Benoit, though the *Historia Troiana* of Guido delle Colonne may also have been consulted (see l. 1044). Chaucer (or his audience, see *Prologue to Legend of Good Women*) has evidently been dissatisfied with Boccaccio's account of Cressida's faithlessness. Cressida's complaint (ll. 1051 *seq.*) is probably Chaucer's own. Chaucer returns to Boccaccio at l. 1100.

The whiche he onés wan of Troilus ; 1039
Andeka broche—and that was litel nede!—
That Troilus' was, she yaf this Diomedé ;
And ek, the bet from sorwe him to releve,
She made him were a pencil of her sleve.

I finde ek in the stories elléswhere,
Whan thorough the body hurt was Diomedé
Of Troilus, tho wep she many a tere,
Whan that she saw his widé woundés blede ;
And that she took, to kepen him, good
hede ;

And, for to hele him of his sorwés smerte,
Men scyn—I n'ot—that she yaf him her
herte. 1050

But trewely the storie telleth us,
Ther madé neveré woman moré wo
Than she, whan that she falséd Troilus.
She seyde, 'Allas ! for now is clene ago
My name of trouthe in love for everémo !
For I have falséd oon the gentileste
That everé was, and oon the worthieste !

'Allas ! of me, unto the worldés ende,
Shal neither ben y-written nor y-songe
No good word, for this bokés wol me
shende. 1060

O, rolled shal I ben on many a tonge :
Throughout the world my bellé shal be
ronge :

And women most wol haté me of alle !
Allas, that swich a cas me sholdé falle !

'They wol seyn, in as muche as in me is,
I have hem don dishonour, weylaway !
Al be I not the firste that dide amis,
What helpeth that, to don my blame away ?
But, sin I see ther is no bettré wey, 1069
And that too late is now for me to rewe,
To Diomedé algatc I wol be trewe.

'But Troilus, sin I no bettré may,
And sin that thus departen ye and I,
Yet preye I God so give you right good day
As for the gentilesté, trewely,
That evere I say, to serven feithfully,
And best can ay his lady honour kepe.'
And with that word she brast anon to wepe.

1044. *the*, J and others omit.

1046. *wep*, so J P G ; H₄ *wepé gan*; *rest wepte*.

'And certès, you ne haten shal I nevere,
And frendès love, that shal ye han of me,
And my good-word, al mighte I livèn evere !
And trowéliche, I woldè sory be 1082
For to sen you in any adversité :
And giltèles, I wot wel, I you leve :
But al shal passe !—And thus take I my
leve.'

But trowély, how longe it was bitwene,
That she forsook him for this Diomedé,
Ther n'is non auctour telleth it, I wene :
Take every man now to his bokès hede,
He shal no termè finden, out of drede ;
For though that he bigan to wowe hersone,
Or he her wan, yit was ther more to done.

Ne me ne list this sely womman chide
Further than thilkè storic wol devise :
Her name, allas, publisshèd is so wide,
That for her gilt it oughte y-nough suffice :
And if I mighte excuse her any wise,
For she so sory was for her untrouthe,
Y-wis, I wolde excuse her yit for routhe.

—This Troilus, as I bifore have told, 1100
Thus driveth forth as wel as he hath might :
But often was his hertè hoot and cold,
And namèly that ilkè ninthè night,
Which on the morwè she had him bihight
To come ayein : God wot, ful litel reste
Hadde he that night : nothing to slepe
him leste !

The laurer-crownèd Phebus with his hete
Gan, in his cours ay upward as he wente,
To warme of th' estè see the wawès wete,
And Nisus' doughter song with fressh
entente, 1110

Whan Troilus his Pandar after sente,
And on the wallès of the town they pleyde,
To loke if they can sen aught of Criseyde.

1081. *mighte*, J and others *sholde*.

1083. *any*, so H₄ Cx. S ; rest omit.

1085. *But*, J H₃ Cl. *And*.

1094. *thilke* (?), Cl. *this* ; rest *the*.

1095. *publisshe*d, so H₂ Cx. ; J and others *pun-*
*isshe*d.

1103. *ninthè*, J G H₃ *ten*the.

1110. *Nisus' doughter*, Scylla, changed into a
lark. See *L.G.W.* 1908.

Til it was noon they stoden for to see
Who that ther com ; and every maner wight
That com fro fer, they seiden it was she,
Til that they couden knowèn him aright ;
Now was his hertè dul, now was it light ;
And thus bi-japèd, stonden for to stare
Aboutè naught this Troilus and Pandare !

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seyde, 1121
'For aught I wot, bifor noon sikerly
Into this townne com'th not here Criseyde.
She hath y-nough to donè, hardily,
To winnen from her fader, so trowe I.
Her oldè fader wol yit make her dine
Or-that she go : God give his hertè pine !'

Pandare answerde, 'It may wel be, certein ;
And for-thy lat us dine, I thee biseche ;
And after noon than maystow come
ayein.' 1130

And hom they gon, withouten morè
speche,
And come ayein. But longè may they
seche

Or-that they finden that they after cape :
Fortune hem bothè thenketh for to jape !

Quod Troilus, 'I see wel now that she
Is taried with her oldè fader so,
That, or she come, it wil neigh even be.
Com forth, I wol unto the yatè go.
These porters ben unconning everè mo,
And I wol don hem holden up the yate
As naught ne were, although she comè
late.' 1141

The day go'th faste, and after that com'th
eve,

And yit com nought to Troilus Criseyde.
He loketh forth by haye, by tree, by greve,
And fer his hed over the wal he leyde ;
And at the laste he tornèd him and seyde,
'By God, I wot her mening now, Pandaré !
Almost, y-wis, al newè was my care !

'Now doutèles this lady can her good !
I wot she meneth riden prively, 1150

1123. *here*, J and others omit.

1125. *winnen*, J Cl. *twinnen*.

1144. *haye* (?), all *heg(g)es*, *heg(g)e*. (See iii.
351.)

And I comende her wisdom, by myn hood !
 She n'il not maken peplé nicely
 Gaure on her whan she com'th ; but softely
 By night into the town she thenketh ride.
 And, deré brother, thenk not long t'abide ;

We have not ellès for to done, y-wis.—
 And Pandarus, now wiltow trowen me ?
 Have here my trouthe, I see her ! Yond
 she is !

Heve up thinc y'en, man ! Maystow not
 see ?' 1159

Pandáre answérðc, 'Nay, so mote I thee !
 Al wrong, by God ! What seystow, man ?
 Wher arte ?

That I see yond n'is but 'a faré-carte !'

'Allas, thou sey'st ful soth !' quod Troilus.
 'But, hardily, it n'is not al for nought
 That in myn herte I now rejoisè thus :
 It is ayeins som good I have a thought.
 N'ot I not how, but sin that I was wrought
 Ne felte I swich a confort, soth to seye !
 She com'th to-night, my lif that dorste I
 leye !'

Pandáre answérde, 'It may be, wel
 y-nough !' 1170

And held with him of al that ever he leyde :
 But in his herte he thoughte, and softè
 lough,

And to himself ful sobreliche he seyde :
 'From hasel-wode ther joly Robin pleyde
 Shal come al that that thou abidest here !
 Ye, far-wel al the snow of ferné yere !'

The wardein of the yatès gan to calle
 The folk whiche that withoute the yatès
 were,

And bad hem driven in hir beestès alle,
 Or al the night they mosten bleven there.
 And fer withinne the night, with many a
 tere, 1181

This Troilus gan homward for to ride,
 For wel he seeth it helpeth nought t'abide.

1151. *And I* (P), all *I*. (Boc. ed. ia 'I commendo.)

1163. *ful*, S γ (exc. A) *right*.

1168. *soth to seye*, S γ (exc. A) *dar I seye*.

1171. *leyde* (P), all *seyde*. (See ll. 1169, 1304.)

1174-1176. In Boccaccio, 'From Etna the poor
 fellow expects a wind !'

1175. *that that*, so J P H₁ R Cl.; A *that at*;
 rest *that*.

But nathêles he gladded him in this :
 He thoughte he misaccounted hadde his day,
 And seide, 'I understonden have amis ;
 'For th'ilkè night I last Criseyde say,
 She seide, "I shal ben here, if that I may,
 Or that the mone, O deré hertè swete,
 The Lioun passe out of this Ariete." 1190

'For-which she may yit holde al her
 biheste.'—

And on the morwe unto the yate he wente,
 And up and down, by weste and ek by este,
 Upon the wallès made he many a wente,
 But al for nought : his hope alwéy hir
 blente.

For-which at night, insorwe and sikèssore,
 He wente him hom, withouten any more.

His hope al clene out of his hertè fledde,
 He n'hath wheron nowlenger for to honge.
 But for the peyne him thoughte his hertè
 bledde, 1200

So were his throwès sharpe and wonder
 stronge.

For, whan he saw that she abood solonge,
 He n'istè what he jugen of it mightè,
 Sin she hath broken that she him bihighte.

The thriddè, ferthè, fiftè, sixtè day
 After tho dayès ten of which I tolde,
 Bitwixen hope and drede his hertè lay,
 Yit somwhat trusting on her hestès olde ;
 But whan he saw shen'olde her termè holde,
 He can now sen non other remedye 1210
 But for to shape him sonè for to dye.

Therwith the wikked spirit (God us blesse!)
 Which that men clepeth wodè Jalousye,
 Gan in him crepe in al his hevinesse ;
 For-which, bicause he woldè sonè dye,
 He n'et ne dronk for his maléncolye,
 And ek from every companye he fledde :
 This was the lif that al this time he ledde.

He so defet was, that no maner man
 Unnethe him mightè knowè ; ther he
 wente, 1220

So was he lene, and therto pale and wan

1190. *this*, J H₂ R *his*; G *that*. (See iv. 1590.)

1213. *wodè*, P H₃ D Cp. Cl. *the wode*.

And feblé, that he walketh by potente ;
And with his ire he thus himselfen shente.
And who-so axéd him wherof him smerte,
He seide, his harm was al aboute his herte.

Priam ful ofte, and ek his moder dere,
His brethren and his sustren gonne him
freyne

Why he so sorful was in all his chere,
And what thing was the cause of al his
peyne ;

But al for nought. He n'olde his causé
pleyne, 1230

But seide he felte a grevous maladye
Aboute his herte, and fayn he woldé dyc.

So on a day he leyde him down to slepe :
And so bifil that in his slep him thoughte
That in a forest faste he welk to wepe
For love of her that him this peyné
wroughte ;

And, up and down as he the forest soughte,
Him mette, he say a boor with tuskés grete,
That slep ayein the brighté sonnés hete ;

And by this boor, faste in her armés
folde, 1240

Lay, kissing ay, his lady bright, Criseyde :
For sorwe of which, whan heit gan biholde,
And for despit, out of his slep he breyde,
And loude he cri'de on Pandarus, and
seyde, .

' O Pandarus, now knowe I crop and rote !
I n'am but ded, ther n'is non other bote !

' My lady bright, Criseyde, hath me
bitrayed,

In whom I trusted most of any wight :
She elléswere hath now her herte apayed :
The blisful Goddés through hir greté might
Han in my drem y-shewéd it ful right ! 1251
Thus in my drem Criseyde I have
biholde, .

And al this thing to Pandarus he tolde.

' O my Criseyde, allas ! what subtilté,
What newélust, what beauté, what sciéce,
What wraththe of justé cause han ye to me ?
What gilt of me, what fel experience

1240. *her*, H₄ Cl. *his* ; P H₂ H₃ Cx. omit.

Hath fro me reft, allas, thyn ádvertence ?
O trust ! O feith ! O depé ássuraunce !
Who hath me reft Criseyde, al my ples-
aunce ?

' Allas ! whylet I you from hennés go, 1261
For which wel neigh out of my wit I breyde ?
Who shal now trowe on any othés mo ?
God wot, I wen'de, O lady bright, Criseyde,
That every word was gospel that ye seyde !
But who may bet bigilé, yif him liste,
Than he on whom men weneth best to triste ?

' What shal I don, my Pandarus ? Allas !
I felc now so sharpe a newé peyne, 1269
Sin that ther li'th no remedie in this cas,
That bet were it I with mine hondés tweyne
Myselven slow, alwey than thus to pleyne ;
For through the deth my wo sholde have
an ende,
Ther every day with lif myself I shende.'

Pandáre answérde and seide, ' Allas the
while

' That I was born ! Have I not seid or this,
That dremés many a maner man bigile ?
And why ? For folk expounden hem amis !
How darstow seyn that fals thyladyis 1279
For any drem, right for thyn owné drede ?
Lat be this thought, thou canst no dremés
rede !

' Paraunter, ther thou dremest of this boor,
It may so ben that it may signéfyc,
Her fader, which that old is and ek hoor,
Ayein the sonné li'th, o-point to dye,
And she for sorwé ginneth wepe and crye,
And kisseth him ther he li'th on the
grounde :
Thus sholdestow thy drem a-right ex-
pounde !'

' I how mighte I thanné don,' quod Troilus,
' To knowe of this, ye, were it nevere so
lite ?' — 1290

' Now seystow wisly !' quod this Pandarus.
' My red is this : sin thou canst wel endite,

1259. read ? *O drépe feith ! O assurance !*

1266. *yif*, so J G H₄ ; H₃ D *if that* ; others *if*

1270. *li'th*, S *γ is*.

That hastily a lettré thou her write,
Thorough which thou shalt wel bringen it
abouté,
To knowe a soth ther thou art now in doute.

'And see now why! for this I dar wel seyn;
That, if so is that she untrewé be,
I can not trowén she wol write ayein;
And, if she writé, thou shalt soné see
As whether she hath any liberté ¹³⁰⁰
To come ayein, or ellés in som clause,
If she be let, she wol assigne a cause.

'Thou hast not writen hersin that she wente,
Nor she to thee; and this I dorsté leye,
Ther may swich causé ben in her entente,
That hardly thou wolt thyselfen seye
That her abood the beste is for you tweye.
Now write her thanne, and thou shalt
felé sone
A soth of al: ther n'is no more to done.'

Acorded ben to this conclusioun, ¹³¹⁰
And that anon, thise ilké lordés two;
And hastily sit Troilus adoun,
And rolleth in his herté to and fro
How he may best discriven her his wo.
And to Criseyde, his owné lady dere,
He wrot right thus, and seide as ye shal
here.—

'Right fresshé flour, whos I ben have and
shal,
Withouten part of elléswhere servise,
With herté, body, lif, lust, thought, and al,
I, woful wight, in every humblé wise ¹³²⁰
That tongé telle or herté may devise,
As ofte as mater occupieth place,
Me recomaunde unto your noblé grace.

'Liketh it you to witen, sweté herte,
As ye wel knowe, how longé time agon
That ye me lefte in aspré peynés smerte
Whan that ye wente: of which yit boté non
Have I non had, but everé wors bigon

^{1295.} *ther thou art now*, J Cx. omit *now*; S γ
of that (H₃ of which) *thou art*.

^{1298.} *she*, so J R Cx. G H₃; rest *that she*.

^{1299.} *some*, J and others *ful some*.

^{1316.} *shal*, so J P R Cx. G H₄; rest *may*.

^{1324.} *it*, J and others omit.

Fro day to day am I, and so mot dwelle,
Whil it you list, of wele and wo my welle!

'For-which to you, with dredful herté
trewe, ¹³³¹
I write, as he that sorwé drif'th to write,
My wo that everich houre encresseth newe,
Compleyning as I dar or can endite.
And that defacéd is, that may ye wite
The terés whiche that fro mine *yen* reyne,
That wolden speke if that they coude, and
pleyne.

'You first biseche I, that your *yen* clere,
To loke on this, defouléd ye not holde,
And over al this, that ye, my lady dere, ¹³⁴⁰
Wol vouché-sauf this lettré to biholde:
And by the cause ek of my carés colde
That sleeth my wit, if aught amis m'asterte,
Forgive it me, myn owné sweté herte!

'If any servant dorste or oughte of right
Upon his lady pitously compleyne,
Than wene I that ich oughté ben that
wight,
Consideréd this, that ye thise monthés
tweyne
Han tariéd, ther ye seyden, soth to seyne,
But dayés ten ye n'olde in oost sojorne,—
But in two monthés yit ye not retorne. ¹³⁵¹

'But for as muche as me mot nedés like
Al that you list, I dar not pleyné more;
But humblély, with sorwful sikés sike,
You write ich mine unresty sorwes sore,
Fro day to day desiring everé more
To knowén fully, if your wille it were,
How ye han ferd and don whil ye be there:

'The whos welfare and hele ek God
encresse ¹³⁵⁹
In honour swich, that upward in degree
It growe alwey, so that it neveré cesse.
Right as your herte ay can, my lady free,
Devise, I preye to God so mote it be,
And grante it that ye sone upon me rewe
As wisly as in al I am you trewe!

^{1335.} *And that*, J *And that it* (read ? *And that*).

^{1365.} *you*, J and others *to you*; Cx. *your*.

And if you liketh knowen of the fare
Of me, whos wo ther may no wit describe,
I can no more, but, cheste of every care,
At writing of this lettre I was on-live,
Al redy out my woful gost to drive : 1370
Which I delay, and holde him yit in honde
Upon the sighte of mater of your sonde.

Myn yen two, in veyn with whiche I see,
Of sorwful teres salte am waxen welles :
My song, in pleynte of myn adversité :
My good, in harm : myn ese ek waxen
helle is :

My joye, in wo : I can seye you nought
elles,

But turned is, for which my lif I warie,
Evêrich joye or ese in his contrarie.

Which with your coming hom ayein to
Troye 1380

Yemay redresse, and, more a thousand sithe
Than evêreich hadde, encressen in me joye.
For was ther neverè hertè yit so blithe
To han his lif as I shal ben, as swithe
As I you see. And, though no maner
routhe

Commevè you, yit thenketh on your
trouthe.

And if so be my gilt hath deth deserved,
Or if you list no more upon me see,
In guerdon yit of that I have you served
Biseche I you, myn hertès lady free, 1390
That her-upon ye wolden writè me,
For love of God, my rightè lodè-sterre,
That deth may make an ende upon my
werre !

If other cause aught doth you for to
dwelle,

That with your lettrè ye me réconforte !
For, though to me your absence is an helle,
With patience I wol my wo conporte,
And with your lettre of hope I wol desporte.
Now writeth, swete, and lat me thus not
pleyne :

With hope, or deth, delivereth me fro
peyne ! 1400

1367. *wit*, G Cl. and others *wight*; H₄ *man*.
1393. *That*, Cx. *Or*; H₂ *The*; Cl. Cp. *Ther*.

Y-wis, myn ownè derè hertè trewe,
I wot that, whan ye next upon me see,
So lost have I myn hele and ek myn hewe,
Criseyde shal not connè knowen me.
Y-wis, myn hertès day, my lady free,
So thursteth ay myn hertè to biholde
Your beauté, that my lif unnethè I holde.

I sey no more, al have I for to seye
To you wel morè than I tellen may. 1409
But whether that ye do me live or deye,
Yit preye I God so yive you right good day !
And far'th wel, goodly fairè fresshè may,
As she that lif or deth me may comaunde !
And to your trouthe ay I me recomaunde

With helè swich that, but ye given me
The samè hele, I shal non helè have !
In you li'th, whan you list that it so be,
The day on which me clothen shal my
grave :

In you my lif, in you might for to save
Me from disese of allè peynès smerte ! 1420
And far'th now wel, myn ownè swetè
herte !

This lettrè forth was sent unto Criseyde,
Of which her answer in effect was this :
Ful pitously she wrot ayein, and seyde,
That al-so sone as that she mighte, y-wis,
She woldè come, and mende al that was
mis,

And finaly—she wrot and seide him
thane—

She woldè come, ye, but she n'istè whanne.

But in her lettrè made she swichè festes
That wonder was, and swer'th she lov'th
him best : 1430

Of which he fond but botmèles bihestes.
But Troilus, thou mayst now, est or west,
Pipe in an ivy leef, if that thee lest !
Thus go'th the world ! God shilde us
fro mischaunce,
And every wight that meneth trouthe
avaunce !

Encressen gan the wo fro day to night
Of Troilus, for taryng of Criseyde,

1413. *she*, Cx. S y *ye*.

And lessen gan his hope and ek his might ;
 For which al down he in his bed him leyde.
 He n'et, ne dronk, ne slep, ne no word
 seyde, 1440
 Imagininge ay that she was unkinde ;
 For-which wel neigh he wex out of his
 minde.

This drem, of which I told have ek biforn,
 May neveré come out of his rémembraunce :
 He thoughte ay wel he hadde his lady lorn,
 And that that Jovés of his purveyaunce
 Him shewéd hadde in slep the signefiaunce
 Of her untrouthe and his disaventure,
 And that this boor was shewed him in
 figure. 1449

For-which he for Sibille his suster sente,
 That calléd was Cassandre ek al aboute ;
 And al his drem he tolde her or he stente,
 And her bisoughte assoilen him the doute
 Of th'ilke strongé boor with tuskés stoute ;
 And finaly withinne a litel stounde
 Cassandre him gan right thus his drem
 expounde.

She gan first smile, and seide, 'O brother
 dere,
 If thou a soth of this desirest knowe,
 Thou most a fewe of oldé stories here,
 To purpos how that Fortune overthrowe
 Hath lordés olde: thorough which, withinne
 a throwe, 1461
 Thou wel this boor shal knowe, and of
 what kinde
 He comén is, as men in bokés finde.

'Diané, which that wroth was and in ire
 For Grekés n'olden don her sacrifice,
 N'encéns upon her auter sette a-fire,
 She, for-that Grekés gonne her so despise,
 Vengéd her in a wonder cruel wise ;

1440. *no word*, so H₁ R Cx.; G *no word he ne*
 (om. *ne slep*); H₃ *worde ne*; rest *word(e)*.
 1446. *that that*, so J P H₁ G Frag.; rest *that*.
 (See iii. 1751, 1758.)

1447. *signefiaunce*, so J A; rest *signifiaunce*.
 1449. *this*, H₃ S γ *the*.
 1454. *thilke* (t), R *that*; Cx. *this*; A *a*; rest
the.

1457. The incidents in the following lines are
 taken from Ovid and Statius. Chaucer returns
 to Boccaccio at l. 1573.

1468. *Venged*, so H₂ only; rest *W'ek*.

For with a boor as gret as oxen in stalle
 She made up-frete hir corn and vinés alle.

'To slee this boor was al the contré reysed,
 Amongés whiche ther com, this boor to
 see, 1472
 A mayde, oon of this world the best
 y-preysed ;

And Meleagré, lord of that contré,
 He lovedé so this fresshé maydè free
 That with his manhod, or he woldé stente,
 This boor he slow, and her the hed he
 sente :

'Of which, as oldé bokés tellen us,
 Ther ros a contek and a gret envye.
 And of this lord descended Tydés 1480
 By ligne, or ellés oldé bokés lye :
 But how this Meleagré gan to dyc
 Thórough his moder, wol I you not telle,
 For al too long it wéré for to dwelle.'

She tolde ek how Tydés, or she stente,
 Unto the strongé cité of Thebés
 To cleymen kingdom of the cité wente
 For his felawé, daun Polymites,
 Of which the brother, daun Ethiocles,
 Ful wrongfully of Thebés held the
 strengthe: 1490
 This toldé she by proces al by lengthe.

She tolde ek how Hemonides asterte,
 Whan Tydés slough fifty knightés stoute ;
 She tolde ek alle the prophecies by herte,
 And how the sevené kingés with hir route
 Bisegéden the cité al aboute ;
 And of the holy serpent, and the welle,
 And of the Furies, al she gan him telle :

1473. *A mayde*, Atalanta.

1480. Tydeus was Meleager's brother. Chaucer's mistake may have been made on purpose; or it may be due to *Illustrato* vii. stanza 27, where Troilus refers to Meleager as the ancestor of Diomedes.

1480. *gan to*, G *duce*.

1481. *Thórough his*, H₂ *Thurgh*; G *Of hire*;
 R *Thurgh out*.

1483. *his moder*, Althaa.

1498. The following argument of the twelve
 books of Statius' *Thebais* is placed after this line
 in all the MSS. except H₁ and Rawl. :—

Associat profugum Tideo *primus* Polinitem;
 Tideo legatum docet insidit asque *secundus*;
 Tercius Hemonidem canit et vates latitantes ;

Of Archimoris' burying and the pleyes,
And how Amphiorax fil thourgh the
grounde ; 1500

How Tydëus was slayn, lord of Argéyes :
And how Ypomedon in litel stounde
Was dreyn't, and ded Parthonopé of
wounde :

And also how Cappaneüs the proude
With thonder-dint was slayn, that cri'de
loude.

Sheganektelle him how that either brother,
Ethiocles and Polymite also,
Yit at a scarmuche ech of hem slough
other,

And of Argivës weping and hir wo :
And how the town was brent she tolde ek
tho ; 1510

And so descendeth down from gestës olde
To Diomede : and thus she spak and tolde.

' This ilkë boor bitokneth Diomede,
Tydëus sone, that doun descended is
Fro Meleagre, that made the boort to blede :
And thy lady, wher-so she be, y-wis,
This Diomede her herte hath, and she his.
Wep if thouwolt, or lef ! For out of doute
This Diomede is inne, and thou art oute ! '

' Thou seyst not soth,' quod he, ' thou
sorceresse, 1520
With al thy falsë gost of propheeye !
Thou wenest ben a gret devineresse !
Now seestow not this fool of fantasye
That peyneth her on ladies for to lye !

*Quartus habet reges facientes prelia septem ;
Mox furio Lenne quinto narratur et anguis ;
Archimori bustum sexto huiusque legimus ar ;
Dat Graius Thebes et v. rem t. p. m. i. vulnus,
Oratio cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelagus,
Ypomedon nono moritur cum, Parthonopée ;
Fulmine percussus, decimo Capaneus superatur,
Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnere fratres ;
Arguam sentem narrat duodevus et ignem.*

1502-1504. J G read :

And how Ypomedon with blody wounde
And ek Parthonopé in litel stounde
Ben slayn, and how Cappaneüs the proude

1503. *ded*, Cp. *dede* (read ? *deyde* *Parthonopé*
of . . .).

1508. *Yit at*, so A ; rest *at*.

1516. *wher-so*, Cl. *wher that* ; J and others
wher (read ? *And thus thy lady, wher she be*,
y-wis).

1524. *That peyneth* (?), all *Peyneth*.

Away !' quod he, ' Ther Jovës yive thee
sorwe !

Thou shalt ben fals paraunter yit to-morwe !

' As wel thou mightest lyën on Alceste,
That was of créaturës, but men lye,
That everë weren, kindest and the beste :
For whan her housband was in jupartye
To dye himself but-if she woldë dye, 1531
She ches for him to dye and gon to helle,
And starf anon, as us the bokës telle ! '

Cassandrë go'th : and he with cruel herte
Foryat his wo for angrë of her speche,
And from his bed al sodeinly he sterte,
As though al hool him haddë maad a leche.
And day by day he gan enquere and seche
A soth of this with al his fullë cure :
And thus he drieth forth his aventure. 1540

—Fortünë, which that permutacioun
Of thingës hath, as it is her committed
By pürveyaunce and disposicioun
Of heighë Jove, as regnës shal be flitted
Fro folk to folk, or whan they shal be
smitted,
Gan pulle away the fetherës brighte of Troye
Fro day to day, til they ben bare of joye.

Among al this, the fyn of the paródie
Of Ector gan aprochen wonder blive : 1549
The Fatë wolde, his soulë sholde unbódie,
And shapen hadde a mene it out to drive
Aycins which fate him helpeth not to strive ;
But on a day to figheten gan he wende,
At which, alas, he caughte his livës ende.

For which me thinketh every maner wight
That haunteth armës oughtë to biwaile
The de.h of him that was so noble a
knight ;
For, as he drough a king by th'aventaile,
Unwar of this, Achilles, thorough the maile
And thorough the body gan him for to rive :
And thus this worthy knight was brought
of live. 1561

1527. *Alceste*, *Alcestis*. See l. 1778, and
L.G.W. 432, etc.

1532. *for him to dye and gon*, J G to *dye* (G
deth) and *ek to gon*.

1543. *By*, S y *Thorough*.

1558. This account of the death of Hector
seems to have been taken from Benoît.

For whom, as oldē bokēs tellen us,
Was maad swich wo, that tonge it may not
telle,

And namely, the sorwe of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinessē welles :
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwelle,
That, what for sorwe, and love, and for
unreste,

Ful ofte a day he bad his hertē breste.

But nathēles, though he gan him despeire,
And dredde ay that his lady was untrewē,
Yit ay on her his hertē gan repeire ; 1571
And as thise lovers don, he soughte ay
newe

To gete ayein Criseyde bright of hewe,
And in his herte he wente her excusinge,
That Calcas causēd al her taryinge.

And oftē time he was in purpos grete
Himselven lik a pilgrim to disglise,
To sen her ; but he may not contrefete
To ben unknowe of folk that weren wise,
Ne finde excuse aright that may suffice,
If he among the Grekēs knowēn were :
For which he wep ful ofte, and many a
tere. 1582

To her he wrot yit oftē time al newe
Ful pitously,—he lefte it not forslouthē,—
Bisecching her that, sin that he was trewe,
That she wol come ayein and holde her
trouthē :

For which Criseyde upon a day, for routhe
(I take it so,) touching al this matēre
Wrot him ayein, and seide as ye may
here.— 1589

‘ Cupidēs sone, ensauple of godlihedē,
O swerd of knightthod, sours of gentillesse !
How mighte a wight, in torment and in
dredē

And helēles, you sende as yit gladnēsse ?
I hertēles, I sik, I in distresse !
Sin ye with me, nor I with you may dele,
You neither sende ich hertē may ne hele !

1570. *dredde ay*, J P G H₃ *dred(d)ē*; H₄ *dredde evere*.

1577. *disgrise*, J H₁ Cl. *degise*.

1582. *and*, G H₄ Cl. omit.

1590. Cressida's letter is not in Boccaccio.

‘ Your lettres ful, the papir al y-pleynted,
Conceyved hath myn hertēs pietē : 1598
I have ek seyn with terēs al depeynted
Your lettre, and how that ye requeren me
To come ayein, which yit ne may not be ;
But why, lest that this lettrē founden were,
No mencion ne make I now for fere.

‘ Grevous to me, God wot, is your unreste,
Your haste, and that the Goddēs ordi-
naunce,

It semeth not ye take it for the beste ;
Nor other thing n'is in your rēmem-
braunce,

As thinketh me, but only your plesaunce.
But beth not wroth, and that I you biseche ;
For that I tarie is al for wikked speche. 1610

‘ For I have herd wel morē than I wen'dē,
Touching us two how thingēs hany-stonde,
Which I shal with dissimulinge amende.
And beth not wroth, I have ek understonde
How ye ne don but holden me in honde.
But now no fors : I can not in you gesse
But allē trouthe and allē gentillesse.

‘ Comē I wol ; but yit in swich disioynt
I stonde as now, that what yer or what day
That this shal be, that can I nota-poynt. 1620
But in effect, I preye you as I may
Of your good-word and of your frendship
ay ;

For twēly, whil-that my lif may dure,
As for a frend ye may in me assure.

‘ Yet preye I you, on yvel ye ne take
That it is short which that I to you write.
I dar not, ther I am, wel lettres make,
Ne neverē yit ne coude I wel endite.
Ek gret effect men write in placē lite :
Th'entente is al, and not the lettres space.
And far'th now wel, God have you in his
grace !'— 1631

This Troilus this lettrē thoughte al straunge
Whan he it saugh, and sorwfully he sighte :

1598. *pietē*, so J S Cp.; R *privetee*; rest *pit(e)*, *pete*.

1618. *disioynt*, J and others *disiointe*.

1620. *a-poynt*, J *poynte*; Cl. and others *ap-
(p)oynte*. (See iii. 496, 497.)

Him thoughte it lik a kalendës of chaunge.
 But finally he ful ne trowen mighte
 That she ne wolde him holden that she
 highte ;
 For with ful yvel wil list him to leve
 That loveth wel, in swich cas, though him
 greve !

But nathêles men seyn that at the laste,
 For anything, men shal the sothê sec ! 1640
 And swich a cas bitidde, and that as faste,
 That Troilus wel understood that she
 N'as not so kinde as that her oughte be ;
 And finally he wot now, out of doute,
 That al is lost that he hath ben aboute.

—Stood on a day in his maléncolye
 This Troilus, and in suspicioun
 Of her for whom he wen'dê for to dye :
 And so bifel that thorough-out Troyé toun,
 As wasthe gise, y-born was up and doun 1650
 A maner cote-armûre, as seith the storie,
 Biforn Deiphêbe in signe of his victorie :

The whichê cote, as telleth Lollius,
 Deiphêbe it hadde y-rent fro Diomedé
 The samê day. And whan this Troilus
 It saugh, he gan to taken of it hede,
 Avising of the lengthe and of the brede
 And al the werk. But, as he gan biholde,
 Ful sodeinliche his hertê gan to colde,

As he that on the coler fond withinne 1660
 A broche, that he Criseyde yaf that morwe
 That she from Troyé mostê nedês twinne,
 In rémembraunce of him and of his sorwe.
 And she him leydeayein her feith to borwe
 To kepe it ay ! But now ful wel he wiste,
 His lady n'as no longer on to triste.

He go'th him hom, and gan ful sonê sende
 For Pandarus ; and al this newê chaunce
 And of this broche he tolde him, word and
 ende,
 Complayning of her hertês variaunce, 1670
 His longê love, his trouthe, and his
 penaunce.

And after deth, withouten wordês more,
 Ful faste he cri'de, his reste him to restore.

1653. *Lollius*, Boccaccio. (See i. 394 note.)

Than spak he thus, 'O lady bright,
 Criseyde,
 Wher is your feith, and wher is your
 biheste ?

Wher is your love ? Wher is your trouthe ?'
 he seyde ;

'Of Diomedé have ye now al this feste !
 Allas ! I wolde han trowed at the leste
 That, sin ye n'olde in trouthe to me stonde,
 That ye thus n'olde han holden me in
 honde ! 1680

'Who shal now trowe on any oothês mo ?
 Allas ! I n'oldê nevere han wen'd or this
 That ye, Criseyde, coude han changêd so,
 Ne, but I hadde agilt and don amis,
 So cruel wen'de I not your herte, y-wis,
 To slee me thus ! Allas, your name of
 trouthe

Is now fordon : and that is al my routhe !

'Was ther non other broche you listê lete
 To feffê with your newê love,' quod he, 1689
 'But th'ilkê broche that I with terês wete
 You yaf as for a rémembraunce of me ?
 Non other cause, allas, ne hadden ye
 But for despit, and ek for-that ye mente
 Al outrelly to shewen your entente !

'Thorough which I see that clene out of your
 minde

Ye han me cast ! And I ne can ne may,
 For al this world, within myn hertê finde
 T'unloven you a quarter of a day !
 In cursed time I born was, weylawey, 1699
 That you, that don me al this wo endure,
 Yit love I best of any créature !

'Now God,' quod he, 'me sendê yit the
 grace.

That I may meten with this Diomedé !
 And trewely, if I have might and space,
 Yet shal I make, I hope, his sidês blede !
 O God,' quod he, 'that oughtest taken hede
 To furthren trouthe, and wrongês to punfêce,
 Why n'iltow don a vengeaunce on this vice ?

'O Pandar, that in dremês for to triste
 Me blamêd hast, and wont art ofte
 upbreyde, 1710

1674. *bright*, H3 S y *nyn* (Boc.)

Now maystow sen thyself, if that thee liste,
How trewe is now thy necé bright,
Criseyde !

In sondry formés, God it wot,' he seyde,
'The Goddés shewén bothé joye and tene
In slep, and by my drem it is now sene.

'And certainly, withouté moré speche,
From hennésforth, as ferforth as I may,
Myn owné deth in armés wol I seche :
I recché not how soné be the day !
But trewely Criseyde, sweté may, ¹⁷²⁰
Whom I haveay with al my might y-served,
That yet thus don, In'haveit not deserved !'

This Pandarus, that alle these thingés herde,
And wisté wel he seide a soth of this,
He not a word aycin to him answärde ;
For sory of his frendés sorwe he is,
And shaméd for his nece hath don amis ;
And stant, astonéd of this causes tweye,
As stille as ston : a word ne coude he seye.

But at the lasté thus he spak and seide : ¹⁷³⁰
'My brother dere, I may do thee no more !
What sholde I seye ? I hate, y-wis,
Criseyde ;

And God wot, I wol hate her everémoré !
And that thou me bisoughtest don of yore,
Having unto myn honour ne my reste
Right no reward, I dide al that thee leste.

'If I dide aught that mighté liken thee,
It is me lief. And of this treson now,
God wot that it a sorwe is unto me !
And dredéles, for hertés ese of yow, ¹⁷⁴⁰
Right fayn I wolde amende it, wiste I how.
And fro this world, almighty God I preye,
Delivere her sone ! I can no moréseye !'—

Gret was the sorwe and pleynte of Troilus.
But forth her cours Fortúne aygan to holde :
Criseyde lov'th the sone of Tydëus,
And Troilus mot wepe in carés colde !
Swich is this world ! Who-so it can biholde,
In ech estat is litel hertés reste !
God leve us for to take it for the beste ! ¹⁷⁵⁰

In many cruel bataille, out of drede,
Of Troilus, this ilké noblé knight,

^{1731.} *do thee, J Cl. thee do.*

As men may in thise oldé bokés rede,
Was sene his knighthod and his greté
might.

And dredéles, his iré, day and night,
Ful cruely the Grekés ay abouthte,
And alwey most this Diomedé he soughte.

And ofté time, I findé that they mette
With blodý strokés and with wordés grete,
Assaying how hir sperés werén whette ; ¹⁷⁶⁰
And God it wot, with many a cruel hete
Gan Troilus upon his helm to bete !
But nathóles, Fortúne it nought ne wolde,
Of othres hond that either deyé sholde.

And if I hadde y-taken for to writen
Thé armés of this ilké worthy man,
Than wolde I of his bataillés enditen.
But for-that I to writen first bigan
Of his loveinge, I have seid as I can. ¹⁷⁶⁹
His worthy dedés, who-so list hem here,
Red Dares : he can telle hem alle i-fere.

Biseching every lady bright of hewe
And every gentil woman, what she be,
That, al be that Criseyde was untrewé,
That for that gilt ye be not wroth with me :
Ye may her gilt in othré bokés see !
And gladlier I wol writé, yif you leste,
Penelopéés trouthe and goode Alceste !

N' I sey not this al-only for thise men ;
But most for wommen that bitrayséd be ¹⁷⁸⁰
Thorough falsé folk. God yive hem sorwe,
amen !

That with hir greté wit and subtilté
Bitraysé you ! And this comneveth me
To speke ; and, in effect, you alle I preye,
Beth ware of men, and herkneth what I
seye !

—Go, litel book ! Go, litel myn tragédie !
Ther God thy maker yit, or-that he dye,
So sendé might to make in som comédie !
But, litel book, no making thou n'envýe,
But subgit be to allé pocsye ! ¹⁷⁹⁰

^{1761.} *many a, J and others many.*
^{1769.} *loveinge, so S ; rest lov.* (See l. 1833.)
(Read ? *As of his love . . .*)

^{1775.} *ye, R S y she.*

^{1776.} *othre, H₂ H₁ othres.*

And kis the steppés wher-as thou seest pace
Virgile, Ovide, Omér, Lucán, and Stace !

And, for ther is so gret diversité
In Englyssh and in writing of our tonge,
So prey to God that non miswrité thee,
Ne thee mismetré for defeaute of tonge !
And, red wher-so thou be or ellés songe,
That thou be understandé God biseche !—
But yet to purpos of my rather speche.

—The wraththe, as I bigan you for to seye,
Of Troilus the Grekés boughten dere ; 1801
For thousandés his hondés maden deye,
As he that was withouten any pere
Save Ector in his time, as I can here.
But weylawey, save only Goddés wille,
Ful pitously him slough the fiersse Achille.

And whan that he was slayn in this manére
His lighté goost ful blisfully is went
Up to the holwesse of the eighté spere,
In convers leting everich element : 1810
And ther he saugh with ful avisément
Th'erratik sterrés, herkning armonyce
With sounés fulle of hevenissh melodye.

And down from thennés faste he gan avise
This litel spot of erthe that with the see
Enbracéd is, and fully gan despise
This wrecched world, and held al vanité
To réspect of the pleyne felicitye
That is in hevene above. And at the laste,
Ther he was slayn his loking down he
caste, 1820

And in himself he lough right at the wo
Of hem that wepen for his deth so faste,

1791. *pace*, so P H₄ Cl. Th. only ; rest *space*.

1795. *prey to God*, so J P Cx. ; others *prey I to God*, *prey I God*, *prey thy God*.

1798. *God biseche*, so J R A Cp. Cl. ; others *God I (thee) biseche*.

1806. *Ful pitously*, Cx. S γ *Dispitously*. (Boc. miseramente.)

1807. The following three stanzas are from the account of the death of Arcite in Boccaccio's *Teseide*. They are omitted in H₂ H₄, and inserted later in P.

1809. *eighte*, J viij ; others *sevente*. (Boc. Ver la concavita del cielo ottava.)

1810. Boc. Degli elementi i connessi lasciando. (Possibly Chaucer uses *convers* here with the meaning of *convex*.)

And dampned al our werk, that folwen so
The blindé lust the whiche that may not
laste,

And sholden al our herte on hevené caste.
And forth he wenté, shortly for to telle,
Ther-as Mercúrie sorted him to dwelle.

Swich fyn hath tho this Troilus for love !
Swich fyn hath al his greté worthinesse !
Swich fyn hath his estat réal above ! 1830
Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his
noblesse !

Swich fyn, this falsé worldés brotelnesse !—
And thus bigan his loving of Criseyde
As I have told, and in this wise he deyde.

—O yongé fresshé folkés, he or she,
In whiche ay love up-groweth with your
age,

Repeireth hom fro worldly vanité !
And of your herte up-casteth the viságe
To th'ilké God that after his imáge
You made ; and thinketh al n'is but a
faire 1840

This world, that passeth sone as flourés
faire !

And loveth Him, the whiche that right
for love

Upon a cros, our soulés for to beye,
First starf, and roos, and sit in hevene
above ;

For He n'il falsen no wight, dar I seye,
That wol his herte al hoolly on him leye !
And sin He best to love is, and most meke,
What nedeth feynéd lovés for to seke ?

Lo here, of payens corséd oldé rites !
Lo here, what alle hir Goddés may
availe ! 1850

Lo here, this wrecched worldés appetites !
Lo here, the fyn and guerdon for travaile
Of Jove, Appollo, of Mars, of swich
rascaile !

Lo here, the forme of oldé clerkés speche
In poetrye, if ye hir bokés seche !

1823. *folwen* (?), all *folweth*.

1824. *that*, J D ne ; H₃ Cl. omit.

1831. *hath*, H₄ omits.

1832. *this* (?), H₃ *hath this* ; H₄ *hath the* ; J and others *hath*.

1836. *ay*, so J P H₂ H₁ H₃ ; R Cx. S γ *that*.

1842. *the*, J and others omit.

—O moral Gowër, this book I directe
 To thee, and to thee, philosophical Strode,
 To vouchen-sauf, ther nede is, to correcte,
 Of your benignetés and zelès gode.—
 And to that sothfast Crist, that starf on
 rode, 1860
 With al myn herte, of mercyever I preye,
 And to the Lord right thus I speke and
 seye :

Thou oon, and two, and three, eterne on-
 live,
 That regnest ay in three and two and oon,
 Uncircumscrip, and al mayst circumscribe,
 Us from visible and invisible foon
 Defende! And to thy mercy, everichoon,
 So make us, Jesus, for thy mercy digne,
 For love of mayde and moder thyn benigne!

CHAUCE'S WORDS UNTO ADAM, HIS OWNE SCRY- VEYNE

ADAM SCRIVEYN, if ever it thee bifalle
 Boece or Troylus for to writen newe,
 Under thy long lokkes thou most have
 the scalle
 But after my making thou write more
 trewe.
 So ofte a daye I mot thy werk renewe,
 Hit to correcte and eek to rubbe and
 scrape;
 And al is through thy negligence and
 rape.

THE HOUS OF FAME

FIRST BOOK

(*Proem*)

GOD turne us every dreem to gode !
 For hit is wonder, be the Rode,
 To my wyt, what causeth swevenes
 Either on morwès, or on evenes ;
 And why theffect folwèth of somme,
 And of somme hit shal never come ;
 Why that is an avisoun,
 And this a revelacioun ;
 Why this a dreem, why that a sweven,
 And noght to every man liche even ; 10
 Why this a fantom, why these oracles,
 I noot : but who-so of these miracles
 The causès knoweth bet then I,
 Devyne he ; for I certeynly
 Ne can hem noght, ne never thynke
 To besily my wyt to swynke,
 To knowe of hir signifiante

7. P a vision ; Cx. that it is a vision ; Th.
 that it is.

8. All insert *why*, caught from line above.

17. P Cx. Th. *significacions*.

The gendrès neither the distaunce
 Of tymès of hem, ne the causès,
 Or why this morè then that cause is ; 20
 As if folkès complexiouns
 Make hem dreme of reflexiouns ;
 Or ellès thus, as other sayn,
 For to greet feblenesse of her brayn,
 By abstinence, or by seeknesse,
 Prisoun, stewe or greet distresse ;
 Or ellès by disordynaunce,
 Of naturel acustomaunce,
 That somme men ben to curious 30
 In studie, or melancolious ;
 Or thus, so inly ful of drede,
 That no man may him botè rede ;
 Or ellès that devocioun
 Of somme, and contemplacioun,
 Causeth swichè dremès ofte ;

18. Cx. Th. *dystinctions*.

19. P Cx. Th. invert *the* before *tymes*.

20. F B *For why*. All read *this is*.

26. P *stoe* ; Cx. Th. *stryf* for *stewe*.

32. F B *bote* *bede*.

Or that the cruel lyf unsofte
Which these ilkè lovers leden,
That hopen over moche or dreden,
That purely hir impressiouns
Causeth hem have visiouns ;
Or if that spirits have the myght
To makè folk to dreame a-nyght ;
Or if the soule, of propre kynde,
Be so parfit as men fynde,
That hit forwot that is to come,
And that hit warneth alle and somme
Of everiche of her aventures,
By avisiouns, or by figures,
But that our flesh ne hath no myght
To understonden hit aright,
For hit is warnèd to derkly ;
But why the cause is, noght wot I.
Wel worthe, of this thyng, gretè clerkes,
That trete of that, and other werkes ;
For I of noon opinioun
Nil as now makè mencion ;
But oonly that the holy rode
Turne us every dreem to gode ;
For never sith that I was born,
Ne no man ellès me beforn,
Mette, I trowè stedfastly,
So wonderful a dreem as I
The tenthè day [dide] of Decembre ;
The which, as I can now remembre,
I wol yow tellèn every dele.

(*The Invocation*)

But at my gynnyng, trusteth wel,
I wol make invocacioun,
With special devocioun
Unto the god of slepe anon,
That dwelleth in a cave of stoon,
Upon a streem that cometh fro Lete,
That is a flood of helle unswete,
Besyde a folk men clepe Cymérie ;
There slepeth ay this god unmerie,

40. F B *hem avisiouns*.

63. Willert reads *dide* for *now* of the MSS. P and Cx. wrongly insert *dide* before *I* in l. 62, having caught it from its right place in l. 63.

64. F *yow* for *now*; Cx. omits *now*.

65. P Cx. omit this and next line.

69. *god of slepe*, Morpheus; cp. *Dethe of the Duchesse*, l. 137, and *Metamorphoses*, xi. l. 592 ff.

71. *Lete*, Lethe.

73. *Cymérie*, Cimmeria.

With his slepy thousand sones,
That alway for to slepe hir wone is ;
That to this god, that I of rede,
Preye I, that he wol me spede,
My sweven for to telle aright,
If every dreem stonde in his myght ;
And he that mover is of al
That is and was, and ever shal,
So yive hem joyè that hit here,
Of alle that they dreame to-yere ;
And for to stonden alle in grace
Of hir loves, or in what place
That hem were levest for to stonde,
And shelde hem fro povèrte and shonde,
And fro unhappe and ech disese,
And sende hem al that may hem plesse,
That take hit wel and scorne hit noght,
Ne hit mysdemen in her thought,
Through malicious entencioun.
And who-so, through presumpcioun,
Or hate, or scorne, or through envye,
Dispit, or jape, or vilanýe,
Mysdeme hit, pray I Jesus God,
That (dreame he barfoot, dreame he shod),
That every harm, that any man
Hath had sith the world began,
Befalle him thérof, or he sterve,
And graunt he mote hit ful deserve,
Lo ! with swich a conclusioun,
As hadde of his avisioun
Cresus, that was kyng of Lyde,
That high upon a gebet dyde !
This prayer shal he have of me ;
I am no bet in charité.

Now herkneth, as I have yow seyde,
What that I mette or I abyred.

(*The Dream*)

Of Decembrè the tenthè day,
Whan hit was nyght, to slepe I lay,
Right ther as I was wonte to done,
And fil on slepè wonder sone,
As he that wery was for-go
On pilgrymagè nylès two
To the cōrseynt Léonard,
To makè lythe of that was hard.
But as I sleep, me mette I was

105. *Cresus*, Cræsus, king of Lydia.

119. MSS. *slepè*. Cp. l. 438.

Withyn a temple y-mad of glas ; 120
 In whiche ther werē mo ymāges
 Of gold, stondynge in divers stages,
 And mo richē tabernacles,
 And with perrē mo pynacles,
 And mo curious portreytures,
 And queyntē maner of figūres
 Of golde werke, then I sawgh ever.
 But certeynly I nystē never
 Wher that I was, but wel wyste I,
 It was of Venus redely, 130
 This temple ; for in portreyture,
 I saw anon right hir figure
 Naked fletynge in a see.
 And also on hir heed, pardē,
 Hir rosē garlond white and reed,
 And hir comb to kembe hir heed,
 Hir dowvēs, and daun Cupidō,
 Hir blyndē sone, and Vulcanō,
 That in his facē was ful broun.

But as I romēd up and down, 140
 I fond that on a walle ther was
 Thus writen on a table of bras :
 ' I wol now synge, gif that I can,
 The armēs, and also the man,
 That first cam, through his destinee,
 Fūgitif of Troy contree,
 In Itāile, with ful moche pyne,
 Unto the strondēs of Lavyne.'
 And tho began the story anon,
 As I shal tellē you echoon. 150

First saw I the destruccioun
 Of Troyē through the Greek Synoun,
 [That] with his falsē forswerynge,
 And his chere and his lesyngē
 Made the hors broght into Troye,
 Through which Troyens loste al her joye.

And after this was grave, allas !
 How Ilioun assailed was
 And wonne, and kyng Priām y-slayn,
 And Polites, his sone, certayne, 160
 Dispitously of daun Pirrūs.

135. P *Her roosgarland on her hede*, and om. next line ; Cx. *Rose garlondes swellynge as a mede*, And also *fleyng about her hede*.

143. Cx. *wold . . . now and I* ; F B say for *synge*.

148. *Lavyne*, Lavinium.

152. *Synoun*, Sinon ; cp. *Æn.* ii. l. 195.

153. All omit *That*.

158. *Ilioun*, Ilium.

161. *Pirrūs*, Pyrrhus.

And next that saw I how Venūs,
 Whan that she saw the castel brende,
 Doun fro the hevene gan descende,
 And bad hir sone Eneas flee ;
 And how he fledde, and how that he
 Escapēd was from al the pres,
 And took his fader, Anchisēs,
 And bar him on his bakke away,
 Crying, ' Allas, and welaway !' 170
 The whiche Anchises in his honde
 Bar the goddes of the londe,
 Thilkē that unbrendē were.

And I saw next in al this fere,
 How Creusa, daun Encas wyf,
 Which that he lovēd as his lyf,
 And hir yongē sone Iulō
 And eek Ascanius alsō,
 Fledden eek with drery chere,
 That hit was pitee for to here ; 180
 And in a forest as they wente,
 At a turnyng of a wente,
 How Creusa was y-lost, allas !
 That deed,—ne wot I how—she was ;
 How he hir soughte, and how hi
 gost

Bad hym to flee the Grekēs ost,
 And seyde, he moste into Itāile,
 As was his destinee, sauns faille,
 That hit was pitee for to here,
 Whan hir spirit gan appere, 190
 The wordēs that to him she seyde,
 And for to kepe hir sone him preyde.

Ther saw I graven eek how he,
 His fader eek, and his meynce,
 With his shippēs gan to saile
 Toward the contree of Itāile,
 As streight as that they myghtē go.

Ther saw I thee, cruel Juno,
 That art daun Jupiterēs wyf,
 That hast y-hated, al thy lyf, 200
 Al the Troyanyshē blood,
 Renne and crye, as thou were wood,
 On Polus, the god of wyndes,
 To blowen out of allē kyndes
 So loudē that he shuldē drenche
 Lord and lady, grome and wenche

177. *Iulō*, Iulus, the same person as Ascanius ; cp. *Æn.* i. l. 267.

184. All MSS. read *not* (= *ne wot*).

196. P omits this line.

198. P Cx. Th. insert *eek* before *thee*.

Of al the Troyan nacioun,
Withoute any savacioun.

Ther saw I swich tempeste arise,
That every herté myghte agrise, 210
To see hit peynted on the walle.

Ther saw I graven eek withalle,
Venus, how ye, my lady dre,
Wepying with ful woful chere,
Prayen Jupiter on hye
To save and kepé that navye
Of the Troyan Encás,
Sith that he hir soné was.

Ther saw I Jovés Venus kisse,
And graunted of the tempest lisse. 220

Ther saw I how the tempest stente,
And how with allé pyne he wente,
And prevély took arryvage
In the contree of Cartage;
And on the morwé, how that he
And a knyght hight Achaté,
Metten with Venus that day,
Goyng in a queynt array,
As she hadde ben an hunteresse,
With wynd blowyng upon hir tresse;
How Eneas gan him to pleyne, 231
Whan that he knew hir, of his
peyne;

And how his shippés dreynté were,
Or ellés lost, he nyste where;
How she gan hym comforté tho,
And bad hym to Cartagé go,
And ther his folk he shuldé fynde,
That in the see were left behynde.

And, shortly of this thyng to pace,
She made Encas so in grace 240
Of Dido, quene of that contré,
That, shortly for to tellen, she
Becam his love, and lete him do
Al that weddyng longeth to.
What shulde I speke moré queynte,
Or peyné me my wordés peynte,
To speke of love? hit wol not be;
I can not of that faculté.
And eek to tellé the manere
How that they first aqueyntéd were, 250

208. P *of hem sawacon*; Cx. Th. *of her saunacion*.

226. *Achaté, fidus Achatés.*

237. All read *he shulde his folk*.

244. F B *That that for Al that*.

250. F B *acquyneden in fere*.

Hit were a longe proces to telle,
And over long for you to dwelle.

Ther saw I grave, how Eneas
Toldé Dido every cas,
That him tidde upon the see.

And after gravé was, how she
Made of him, shortly, at a word,
Hir lyf, hir love, hir lust, hir lord;
And didde him al the reverence,
And leyde on him al the dispence, 260
That any woman myghté do,
Wényng hit hadde al be so,
As he hir swoor; and hertly demedé
That he was good, for he swiche semedé.

Allas, what harme doth apparence,
Whan hit is fals in existence!
For he to hir a traytour was;
Wherfor she slow hir-self, alas!

Lo, how a woman doth amys,
To love him that unknowén is! 270
For, by Cryst, lo! thus it fareth;
'Hit is not al gold that glareth.'
For, al-so brouke I wel myn heed,
Ther may be under goodliheed
Keveréd many a shrewéd vyce;
Therfor be no wygt so nyce,
To take a love only for chere,
Or speche, or for frendly manere;
For this shal every woman fynde,
That som man of his puré kynde 280
Wol shewén outward the faireste,
Til he have caught that what him
leste;

And thanné wol he causés fynde,
And swerén how she is unkynde,
Or fals, or prevy or double was.

Al this seye I be Encás
And Dido, and hir nycé lest,
That lovéd al to sone a gest;
Therfor I wol seye o proverbe,
That 'he that fully knoweth therbe 290
May saufly leye hit to his ye';
Withouté dreed, that is no lyé.

But let us speke of Eneás,
How he betrayédé hir, alas!
And lefte hir ful unkyndély.

254. P *Tolde to*.

263. F B Th. *herby for herly*.

271. P *For eny trust lo now*; Cx. *For every trust*.

280-283. All omit except Th.

So whan she saw al-utterly,
That he wolde hir of trouthe faile,
And wendé fro hir to Itaile,
She gan to wringe hir hondés two.
'Allas !' quod she, 'what me is wo ! 300
Allas ! is every man thus trewe,
That every yeer wolde have a newe,
If hit so longé tymé dure ?
Or ellés three, peraventure ?
And thus, of oon he wolde have fame
In magnyfying of his name ;
Another for frendship, seith he ;
And yet ther shal the thriddé be,
That shal be taken for delyt,
Loo, or for syngular profit.' 310

In swiché wordés gan to pleyne
Dido of hir greté payne,
As me metté redély ;
Non other autour alegge I.
'Allas !' quod she, 'my sweté herte,
Have pitee of my sorwé smerte,
And slee me not ! go noght away !'
'O woful Dido, welaway !'
Quod she to hir selvé tho.
'O Eneás ! what wil ye do ! 320
O, that your lové, ne your bonde,
That ye han sworn with your right honde,
Ne my cruel deeth,' quod she,
'May holdé you still heer with me !
O, haveth of my deeth pitee !
Y-wys, my deré herté, ye
Known ful wel that never yit,
As fer-forth as I haddé wyt,
Agilte [I] you in thought ne dede.
O men, have ye swich goodliheed 330
In speche, and never a deel of trouthe ?
Allas, that ever haddé routhé
Any woman on any man !
Now see I wel, and tellé can,
We wrecched wymmen conne noon art ;
For certeyn, for the moré parte,
Thus we be servéd everichone.
How soré that ye men conne grone,
Anoon as we have you receyved,
Certeinly we ben deceyved ; 340
For, though your love laste a sesoun,
Wayte upon the conclusoun,

305. F B *As thus*.329. All omit *I*.333. P Cx. Th. *a fuls man*.

And eek how that ye détermynen,
And for the moré part diffynen.
'O, welaway that I was born !
For through you is my namé lorn,
And myn actés red and songe
Over al this londe, on every tonge.
O wikké Famé ! for ther nys
Nothyng so swift, lo, as she is ! 350
O, sooth is, every thyng is wyst,
Though hit be keveréd with the myst.
Eek, though I myghte endurén ever,
That I have doon rekever I never,
That I ne shal be seyd, allas,
Y-shaméd be through Eneás,
And that I shal thus jugéd be,—
"Lo, right as she hath doon, now she
Wol do eftsonés, hardily."
Thus scyth the peple prevély.' 360
But that is doon nis not to done ;
Al hir compleynt ne al hir mone,
Certeyn avayleth hir not a stre.
And whan she wisté sothly he
Was forth unto his shippés goon,
She into hir chambre wente anoon,
And calléd on hir suster Anne,
And gan her to compleyné thanne ;
And seyde, that she causé was,
That she first lovéd him, alas, 370
And thus counselléd hir therto.
But what ! whan this was seyde and do,
She roof hir-selvé to the herte,
And deyde through the woundé smerte.
But al the maner how she deyde,
And al the wordés that she seyde,
Who-so to knowe hit hath purpos,
Rede Virgile in Eneidos,
Or the Epistle of Ovide,
What that she wroot or that she dide ;
And neré hit to long tendyte, 381
By God, I woldé hit here write.
But, welaway ! the harm, the routhé,
That hath betid for swich untrouthé,
As men may ofte in bokés rede,

347. F B *your* for *myn* ; F B insert *al* before *myn*.362. All read *But* before *Al*, caught from line above ; P *compleynynge ne hir* ; Cx. Th. *ne hir*.370. All except Th. omit *him* ; P Cx. *so* for *first*, perhaps rightly.381. B P Cx. *neré it were* ; F *nor hyt were*.

And al day seen hit yet in dede,
That for to thenken hit a tene is.

Lo, Demophon, duk of Athenis,
How he forswor him ful falsly,
And trayed Phillis wikkedly, 390
That kyngés doghter was of Trace,
And falsly gan his termé pace;
And when she wyste that he was fals,
She heng hir-selven by the hals,
For he hadde do hir swich untrouthe;
Loo! was not this a wo and routhe?

Eek lo! how fals and recchéles
Was to Breseida Achillés,
And París to Enoné;
And Jason to Isiphilé; 400
And eft Jason to Medéa;
Ercúles to Dyanirá;
For he lefte hir for Iólé,
That made him cacche his deeth, pardé.

How fals eek was he, Theseus;

That, as the story telleth us,
How he betrayéd Adriáne;
The devel be his soulés bane!
For had he laughéd, had he loured,
He mosté have ben al devoured, 410
If Adriáne ne haddé be.

And, for she hadde of him pitee,
She made him fro the deeth escape,
And he made hir a ful fals jape;
For after this, withyn a while,
He lefte hir slepyng in an ile,
Deserte alone, right in the se,
And stal away, and leet hir be;
And took hir suster Phedra tho
With him, and gan to shippé go. 420
And yet he hadde y-sworn to here,
On al that ever he myghté swere,
That so she savéde him his lyf,
He wolde have take hir to his wyf,
For she desiréde nothing ellés,
In certeyn, as the book us tellés.

But to excusen Encás
Fulliche of his greté trespas,

388. *Demophon* and the other false lovers mentioned below are referred to in the *Heroides*, Epistles ii. iii. v. vi. ix. x. xi.

398. *Breseida*, Briseis.

400. *Isiphilé*, Hypsipyle; cp. *L. of G. W.*

407. *Adriáne*, Ariadne.

428. Th. inserts *al* before *his*; F B of *al* his trespas.

The book seyth¹ Mercurie, sauns failé,
Bad him go into Itailé, 430
And leve Auffrikés regioun,
And Dido and hir fairé toun.

Tho saw I grave how to Itaille
Daun Eneas is go to saile;
And how the tempest al began,
And how he loste his sterésman,
Which that the stère, or he took keep,
Smot over bord, lo as he sleep.

And also saw I how Sibyle
And Eneas, beside an yle, 440
To hellé wentén, for to see
His fader Anchises the free,
How he ther fond Palínurus,
And also Dido, and Deiphebus,
And every torment eek in hellé
Saw he, which is long to telle.
Which who-so willethe for to knowe,
He mosté redé many a rowe
On Virgile or on Claudian,
Or Daunté, that hit tellé can. 450

Tho saw I grave al tharivaile
That Eneas had in Itaille;
And with kyng Latyne his treté,
And alle the bataillés that he
Was at himself, and eek his knyghtés,
Or he hadde al y-wonne his rightés;
And how he Turnus rešte his lyf,
And wan Lavyna to his wyf;
And al the mervelous signals
Of the goddés celestials;
How, mawgré Juno, Encás
For al hir sleighte and hir compas,
Achevéd al his aventure;
For Jupiter took of him cure,
At the prayere of Venús,—
The whiche I preye alway save us,
And us ay of our sorwés lighte!

When I hadde seyén al this sighte
In this noble temple thus,
'A, Lord!' thoughte I, 'that madest us,
Yet saw I never swich noblesse 471
Of ymages, ne swich richesse,

429. *The book*, i.e. *Æn.* iv. 252 ff.

446. P Cx. *whyche no tonge can telle*.

449. *Claudian*, Claudius Claudianus wrote *De Raptu Proserpine* in the 4th century.

450. *Daunté*, Dante in the *Inferno*.

453. *Latyne*, Latinus, king of the Rutuli.

458. *Lavyna*, Lavinia, daughter of Latinus.

As I saw graven in this chirche ;
But not woot I who dide hem wirche,
Ne wher I am, ne in what contree.
But now wol I go out and see,
Right at the wyket, yif I can
See o-wher any steryng man,
That may me tellé wher I am.'

When I out of the dorès cam,
I faste abouté me behelde.

Then sawgh I but a largé feld,
As fer as ever I myghte see,
Withouten toun, or hous, or tree,
Or bush, or gras, or eréd lond ;
For al the feld nas but of sonde,
As smal as man may see yet lye
In the desert of Lybye ;
Ne no maner creature,

478. Th. *sterynge any*.

That is y-forméd by nature, 490
Ne saw I me to rede or wysse.

'O Crist,' thoughte I, 'that art in blisse,
Fro fantom and illusioun
Me save !' and with devocioun
Myn jën to the heven I caste.

Tho was I war lo ! at the laste,
That faste be the sonne, as hÿe
As kenné myghte I with myn jÿc,
Me thoughte I saw an egle sore,
But that hit semedé moché more 500
Then I hadde any egle seyn.
But, this as sooth as deeth certeyn,
Hit was of gold, and shoon so bright,
That never saw men swich a sight,
But-if the heven hadde y-wonne
Al newe of gold another sonne ;
So shoon the eglès fethrès brighte,
And somewhat downward gan hit lighte.

SECOND BOOK

(Proem)

Now herkneth every maner man,
That English understandé kan,
And listeth of my dreem to lere ;
For at the firsté shul ye here
So sely an avisoun,
That Isayé ne Scipioun,
Ne kyng Nabugodonosor,
Pharo, Turnús, ne Elcanor,
Ne metté swich a dreem as this.
Now fairé blisful, O Cipris,
So be my favour at this tyme !
And ye, me to endite and ryme
Helpeth, that on Parnaso dwelle,
By Elicon the cleré welle.

O Thought, that wroot al that I mette,

4. F B Th. *For now at erste shal*.
6. *Isaye*, Isaiah. *Scipioun*, cp. *P. of Foules*,
l. 31 note.

7. *Nabugodonosor*, Nebuchadnezzar, a variant
of the *Vulgate* spelling Nabuchodonosor.

8. *Pharo*, Pharaoh. *Elcanor*, perhaps Elkanah
(*Vulgate* Elcana); cp. 1 Sam. i. 1.

10. *Cipris*, Venus; cp. *P. of Foules*, l. 277 note.

13. *Parnaso*, Parnassus.

14. *Elicon*; cp. *Anelida*, l. 17 note.

15. *Thought*; cp. *Inferno*, ii. 8 :—

O mente, che scrvesti ciò ch' io vidi.

It here means memory.

And in the tresorie hit shette
Of my brayn ! now shal men se
If any vertu in thee be,
To tellén al my dreem aright ;
Now kythé thyn engyn and myght !

(The Dream)

This egle of which I now have told,
That shoon with fethrès alle of gold,
Which that so hÿe gan to sore,
I gan beholdé more and more,
To see her beautee and the wonder,
But never was ther dynt of thonder,—
Ne that thyng that men callé foudre,
That smyteth sone a tour to poudre,
And in his swifté comyng brende,—
That so swythé gan descende, 30
As this foul when hit behelde,
That I a-roume was in the felde ;
And with his grymmé pawès stronge,
Withyn his sharpé naylès longé,
Me, fleynge, at a swappe he hente,
And with his sours a-geyn up wente,

20. P Th. insert *thy* before *myght*.

28. P Cx. Th. *smyte* for *smyteth*; F B *smote*
som tyme a toure of poudre.

30. P Cx. Th. insert *downward* after *gan*.

Me caryng in his clawés starke,
 As lightly as I were a lark,
 How high, I cannot tellé yow,
 For I cam up, I nysté how. 40
 For so astonyé and a-sweved
 Was every vertu in my heved,
 What with his sours and with my drede,
 That al my felyng gan to dede ;
 For why hit was to greet affray.

Thus I long in his clawés lay,
 Til at the laste he to me spak
 In mannés vois, and seyde, 'Awak !
 And be not so a-gaste, for shame !'
 And calledé me tho by my name. 50
 And for I sholde the bet abreyde,
 Me mette, 'Awak,' to me he seyde,
 Right in the samé vois and stevens,
 That useth oon I coudé nevène ; —
 And with that vois, soth for to seyne,
 My myndé cam to me ageyn
 For hit was goodly seyde to me,
 So nas hit never wont to be.

And herwithal I gan to stere,
 And he me in his feet to bere, 60
 Til that he felte that I hadde hete,
 And felte eek tho myn herté bete.
 And tho gan he me to disporte,
 And with wordés to comforte,
 And saydé twyçs, 'Seynte Marie !
 Thou art noyous for to carie,
 And nothyng nedith hit pardé
 For, al-so wys God helpe me,
 As thou noon harm shalt have of this ;
 And this cas that betid thee is, 70
 Is for thy lore and for thy prow,—
 Let see ! darst thou yet loké now ?
 Be ful assuréd, boldély,
 I am thy frend.' And therwith I
 Gan for to wordnen in my myrde.
 'O God,' thoghte I, 'that madest
 kynde,
 Shal I noon other weyès dye ?
 Wher Joves wol me stellifye,
 Or what thing may this signyfye ?
 I neyther am Énok, ne Elye, 80
 Ne Romulus, ne Ganymede,
 That was y-bore up, as men rede,

To hevène with daun Jupiter,
 And made the goddés botéler.'

Lo ! this was tho my fantasye !
 But he that bar me gan espye
 That I so thoghte, and seyde this :
 'Thow demest of thy-self amys ;
 For Jovés is not therabouté,—
 I dar wel putte thee out of doute,— 90
 To make of thee as yit a sterre.
 But er I bere thee moché ferre,
 I wol thee tellé what I am,
 And whider thou shalt, and why I cam
 To doné this, so that thou take
 Good herte, and not for feré quake.'
 'Gladly,' quod I. 'Now wel,' quod he :—
 'First, I, that in my feet have thee,
 Of which thou haste a feer and wonder,
 Am dwellyng with the god of thunder, 100
 Which that men callén Jupiter,
 That dooth me flee ful ofté fer
 To do al his comaundément.
 And for this cause he hath me sent
 To thee : now herké, by thy trouthe !
 Certeyn he hath of thee routhe,
 That thou so longé trewély
 Hast servéd so ententifly
 I his blindé newew Cupido,
 And fair [dame] Venús also,
 Withouté guerdoun ever yit, 110
 And neverthelesse hast set thy wyt—
 Although that in thy heed ful lyte is—
 To maké bookés, songes, or dytees,
 In ryme, or ellés in cadence,
 As thou best canst in reverence
 Of Love, and of his servants eke,
 That have his servyse soght, and seke ;
 And peynest thee to preyse his arte,
 Although thou haddest never part ; 120
 Wherfor, al-so God me blesse,
 Jovés halt hit greet humblesse,
 And vertu eek, that thou wolt make
 A-nyght ful ofte thyn heed to ake,
 In thy studie so thou writest,
 And evermo of love enditest,
 In honour of him and preisynge,
 And in his folkés furtherynges,
 And in hir matere al devysest,

49. Cx. Th. P *agast so* ; F B omit *so*.

80. *Enok*, Enoch.

80. *Elye*, Elias.

110. All omit *dame*. Skeat inserts *goddesse* after *Venus*.

113. All read *lytel*.

And noght him nor his folk despisest, 130
 Although thou maist go in the daunce
 Of hem that him list not avaunce.

‘Wherfor, as I seyde, y-wys,
 Jupiter considereth wel this;
 And also, beau sir, other thynges;
 That is, that thou hast no tydynges
 Of Lovés folk, if they be glade,
 Ne of nothyng ellès that God made;
 And noght only fro fer contree,
 That ther no tydyng cometh to ther, 140
 But of thy verray neyghébore
 That dwellen almost at thy dores,
 Thou herest neither that ne this;
 For when thy labour doon al is,
 And hast y-maad thy rekenynges,
 In-stede of reste and newé thynges,
 Thou gost hoom to thy hous anoon,
 And, also domb as any stoon,
 Thou sittest at another boke,
 Til fully daswéd is thy looke, 150
 And lyvest thus as an herémyte,
 Although thyn abstynence is lyte.

‘And therfor Jovés, through his grace,
 Wol that I bere thee to a place,
 Which that hight the Hous of Fame,
 To do thee som disport and game,
 In som recompensacioun
 Of labour and devocioun
 That thou hast had, lo! causèles,
 To Cupido the recchèles. 160
 And thus this god, through his merite,
 Wol with som maner thyng thee quyte,
 So that thou wolt be of good chere.
 For trustè wel that thou shalt here,
 When we be comén ther I seye,
 Mo wonder thyngès, dar I leye,
 Of Lovés folkè mo tidynges,
 Both sothè sawés and lesynges;
 And moo lovés newe begonne,
 And longe y-servéd lovés wonne; 170
 And mo lovés casuelly
 That been betid, no man wot why,
 But “as a blynd man stert an hare”;
 And more jolytee and well-fare,
 Whil that they fynden love of stele,
 As thinketh hem, and over-al wele;
 Mo discords, and mo jelousyes,
 Mo murmurs, and mo novelryes,

134. F B omit *wel*.

And mo dissymulaciouns,
 And feynéd reparaciouns; 180
 And mo berdès in two houres—
 Withoutè rasour or sisoures—
 Y-maad, then greynès be of sondes;
 And eek mo holdýng in hondes,
 And also mo renoveलाunçes
 Of olde forletén aqueyntaunces;
 Mo lovè-dayès, and acordes,
 Then on instruments ben cordes;
 And eek of lovés mo eschaunges,
 Than ever cornés were in graunges; 190
 Unethè maistow trowen this?”
 Quod he. ‘No, helpe me God so wys!’
 Quod I. ‘No? why?’ quod he. ‘For hit
 Were impossible to my wyt,
 Though that Fame hadde al the pies
 In al a realme, and al the spies,
 How that yet she shulde here all this,
 Or they espie hit.’ ‘O yis, yis!’
 Quod he to me, ‘that can I preve 200
 By resoun, worthy for to leve,
 So that thou yeve thyn advertence
 To understandè my sentence.

‘First shalt thou herén where she
 dwelleth,
 And so thyn ownè book hit telleth,
 Hir paleys stant, as I shal seye
 Right even a-myddès of the weye,
 Betwixen hevène, erthe, and see;
 That whatsoever in al these three
 Is spoken in privee or aperte, 210
 The wey therto is so overte,
 And stant eek in so juste a place,
 That every soun mot to hit pace,
 Or what so cometh fro any tonge,
 Be hit rounéd, red, or songe,
 Or spoke in suertee or in drede,
 Certeyn hit mostè thider nede.

‘Now herknè wel; for-why I wille
 Tellen thee a proprè skile,
 And a worthy demonstracioun
 In myn ymagynacioun. 220

‘Geffrey, thou wost right wel this,

182. P inserts *any* before *rasour*.

187. P Cx. Th. insert *mo* before *acordes*, perhaps rightly.

192. Cx. Th. *So helpe*. P Cx. Th. *as for so*.

195. P Cx. Th. omit *that*.

219. F *worthe a*; B *worth a*. Perhaps *worche a* is the true reading.

221. P Cx. Th. *wotest wel*.

That every kyndly thyng that is,
 Hath a kyndly stede ther he
 May best in hit conserved be ;
 Unto which place every thyng,
 Through his kyndly enclynyng,
 Moveth for to comen to,
 Whan that it is away therfro ;
 As thus, lo, thou maist al day see
 That any thing that hevy be, 230
 As stoon or leed, or thyng of wighte,
 And ber hit never so hye on highte,
 Lat go thyn hand, hit falleth down.

‘ Right so seye I, by fire or soun,
 Or smoke, or other thynges lighte,
 Alwey they seke upward on highte ;
 Whil ech of hem is at his large,
 Lyght thyng up, and downward charge.

‘ And for this causè mayst thou see, 240
 That every ryver to the see
 Enclyned is to go by kynde.
 And by these skillès, as I fynde,
 Hath fish dwellyng in floode and see,
 And treès eek on erthè be.

Thus every thyng by this resoun
 Hath his propre mansioun,
 To which hit seketh to repaire,
 Ther as hit shuldè not apaire.
 Loo, this sentence is knowen couthe
 Of every philosophrès mouthe, 250
 As Aristotle and dan Platon,
 And other clerkès many oon,
 And to confirmè my resoun,
 Thou wost wel this, that speche is soun,
 Or ellès no man myghte hit here ;
 Now herkne what I wol thee lere.

‘ Soun is noght but eyr y-broken,
 And every spechè that is spoken,
 Lowde or pryvee, foul or fair,
 In his substaunce is but air ; 260
 For as flaumbe is but lightéd smoke,
 Right so soun is air y-broke.
 But this may be in many wyse,
 Of which I wil thee two devyse,
 As soun that cometh of pipe or harpe.
 For whan a pipe is blowen sharpe,

237, 238. Cx. Th. invert these lines. Cx. Th.
Light thynges up ; P Light thynges upward ;
 F B *upward for up.*

254. P Cx. Th. omit *this.*

260. P Cx. *an air.*

262. P Cx. *Th. is soun.*

The air is twyst with violence,
 And rent : lo, this is my sentence ;
 Eck, whan men harpè-stryngès smyte,
 Whether hit be moche or lyte, 270
 Lo, with the strook the air to-brekeþ ;
 Right so hit brekeþ whan men spekeþ.
 Thus wost thou wel what thyng is speche.

‘ Now hennèsforth I wol thee teche,
 How every speche, or noise, or soun,
 Through his multiplicacioun,
 Thogh hit were pipéd of a mouse,
 Moot nedès come to Famès Iouse.
 I preve hit thus—tak hedè now—
 By experience ; for if that thou 280
 Throwe in a water now a stoon,
 Wel wost thou, hit wol make anoon
 A litel roundel as a cercle,
 Paraunter brood as a covercle ;
 And right anoon thou shalt see weel,
 That wheel wol cause another wheel,
 And that the thridde, and soforth, brother,
 Every cercle causyng other,
 Broder than himselve was ;
 And thus, fro roundel to compas, 290
 Ech aboute other goyng,
 Causèth of othrés sterynge,
 And multiplying evermo,
 Til that hit be so fer y-go
 That hit at bothè brynkes be.

Al-thogh thou mowe hit not y-see
 Above, hit goth yet alway under,
 Although thou thenke hit a gret wonder.
 And who-so seith of trouthe I varie,
 Bid him proven the contrarie. 300
 And right thus every word, y-wys,
 That loude or pryvee spoken is,
 Moveth first an air aboute,
 And of his movyng, out of doute,
 Another air anoon is mevéd,
 As I have of the water prevéd,
 That every cercle causeth other.
 Ryght so of air, my levè brother ;

284. P Cx. Th. insert *as* before *brood.*

285. P Cx. omit *this* and the next three lines ;
 F B Th. insert *cercle* after *wheel*, to which it was
 originally a gloss.

289. F B *Wyder than.*

292. F B *Caused.*

296. P Cx. Th. *see.*

297. F B omit *alway.*

303. P Cx. *in the air.*

304. F B *this* for *his.*

Everich air in other stereth
More and more, and speche up bereth 310
Or vois, or noise, or word, or soun,
Ay through multiplicacioun,
Til hit be atte House of Fame,—
Tak hit in ernest or in game.

‘Now have I told, if thou have mynde,
How speche or soun, of purè kynde
Enclynéd is upward to meve ;
This, mayst thou felè, wel I preve.
And that same place, y-wys,
That every thyng enclyned to is, 320
Hath his kyndelichè stede :
That sheweth hit, withoutén drede,
That kyndely the mansioun
Of every speche, of every soun,
Be hit either foul or fair,
Hath his kyndè place in air.
And syn that every thyng that is
Out of his kyndè place, y-wys,
Moveth thider for to go,
If hit a-weyè be therfro, 330
As I before have prevèd thee,
Hit seweth, every soun, pardee,
Moveth kyndely to pace
Al up into his kyndely place.
And this place of which I telle,
Ther as Famè list to dwelle,
Is set amyddès of these three,
Heven, erthe, and eck the see,
As most conservatif the soun.
Than is this the conclusioun, 340
That every speche of every man,
As I thee tellè first began,
Moveth up on high to pace
Kyndely to Famès place.

‘Tellè me this feithfully,
Have I not prevèd thus symply,
Withouten any subtilitee
Of speche, or gret prolixitee
Of termès of philosophye,
Of figurès of poetrýe, 350
Or colours of rethorike ?
Pardee, hit oghtè thee to lyke ;
For hard langage, and hard matére

309. F B omit *in*; Willert reads *another* for *in other*.

319. F *And that sum place stide*; B *And that som styde*; Th. *And that some stede*; P Cx. omit ll. 827-864. *stede* is a gloss on *place*, which has crept into the text. *some* should be *same*.

Is encombrous for to here
Atonès; wost thou not wel this ?
And I answerde and seyde, ‘Yis.’
‘A ha!’ quod he, ‘lo, so I can,
Lewedly to a lewed man
Speke, and shewe him swychè skiles,
That he may shake hem by the biles, 360
So palpable they shuldén be.
But tel me this now pray I thee,
How thinketh thee my conclusioun ?’
[Quod he,] ‘A good persuasioun,’
Quod I, ‘hit is; and lyk to be
Right so as thou hast prevèd me.’
‘By God,’ quod he, ‘and as I leve,
Thou shalt have yet, or hit be eve,
Of every word of this sentence
A prevè by experience; 370
And with thyn crès herén wel
Top and tail, and everydel,
That every word that spokén is
Cometh into Famès House, y-wys,
As I have seyde; what wilt thou more ?’
And with this word upper to sore
He gan, and seyde, ‘By Seynt Jame !
Now wil we speken al of game.

‘How farest thou?’ quod he to me.
‘Wel,’ quod I. ‘Now see,’ quod he, 380
‘By thy trouthe, yond adoun,
Wher that thou knowest any toun,
Or hous, or any other thyng.
And whan thou hast of ought knowyng,
Lokè that thou warnè me,
And I anon shal tellè thee
How fer thou art now therfro.’

And I adoun gan lokén tho,
And beheld feldès and playnes,
And now hilles, and now mountaynes, 390
Now valeys, and now forestes,
And now unethès gretè bestes;
Now ryvérès, now citees,
Now tounès, and now gretè trees,
Now shippès seyllinge in the see.

But thus soun in a while he
Was flowén fro the grounde so hye,
That al the world, as to myn ye,
No more semedè than a prikke;
Or elles was the air so thikke 400
That I ne myghtè not discerne.

364. All omit *Quod he*; Skeat inserts.

387. P omits *fer*; F B Th. insert *that* after *fer*.

With that he spak to me as yerne,
And seydð: 'Seestow any token,
Or ough that in the world is of spoken?'

I seydð, 'Nay.' 'No wonder nis,'
Quod he, 'for half so high as this
Nas Alexandre Macedo;
Ne the kyng, dan Scipio,
That saw in dreame, at poynt devys,
Helle and erthe, and paradys;
Ne eek the wrightè Dedalus,
Ne his child, nyce Icarus,
That fleigh so highè that the hete
His wyngès malt, and he fel wete
In-myd the see, and ther he dreynete,
For whom was maad a greet compleynte.

'Now turn upward,' quod he, 'thy
face,

And behold this largè place,
This eyr; but lokè thou ne be
Adrad of hem that thou shalt see;
For in this regioun, certeyn
Dwellet many a citezeyn,
Of which that speket dan Plato.

These ben the *eyrysh* bestès, lo!'
And tho saw I at that meynce,
Bothè goon and also flece.

'Now,' quod he tho, 'cast up thyn ÿe;
See yonder, lo, the Galaxÿe,

The which men clepe the Milky Wey,
For hit is white: and somme, parfey

Callen hit Watlyngè strete,
That onès wæs brent wyth the hete,

Whan the sonnès sone, the rede,
That hightè Pheton, woldè lede

Algate his fader cart, and gye.
The cart-hors gonnè wel espye

That he [ne] coude no governaunce,
And gonnè for to lepe and daunce,

And berèn him now up, now down,
Til that he saw the Scorpioun,

Which that in heven a sign is yit.
And he, for ferde, lost his wyt

Of that, and lat the reynès goon
Of his hors; and they anoon

403, 404. F B omit. P reads, l. 404, *Or ough
thou knowest yonder down; Th. this for the.*

408. *Scipio*, cp. *Parl. of Foules*, l. 31 note.

411. F B *wrecche* *Dedalus*.

416. F B *maked* *moch* *compleynte*.

427. P Cx. Th. *Lo, quod he, cast.*

437 All omit *ne*.

Gonne up to mounete, and doun descende,
Til bothe eyr and erthè brende;

Til Jupiter, lo, atte laste
Him slow, and fro the cartè caste.

Lo, is it not a greet myschaunce,
To lete a fole han governaunce
Of thynges that he can not demeyne?'

And with this word, soth for to
seyne,

He gan alwey upper to sore,
And gladded me ay more and more,
So feithfully to me spak he.

Tho gan I loken under me,
And behelde the cyrish bestes,
Cloudès, mystès, and tempestes,
Snowès, haylès, reynès, wyndes,
And thengendryng in hir kyndes,

At the wey through which I cam;
'O God,' quod I, 'that made Adam,
Mochè is thy myght and thy noblesse.'

And tho thoughte I upon Boece,
That writ 'A thought may flece so hyc,
With fetherès of Philosophye,

To passen everich element;
And whan he hath so fer y-went,
Than may be seen, behynd his bak,
Cloud, and al that I of spak.'

Tho gan I wexen in a were,
And seyd, 'I woot wel I am here;
But wher in body or in gost

I noot y-wys; but God, thou wost!'
For morè clere entèndement

Nadde he me never yit y-sent.
And than thoughte I on Marcian,

And eek on Antecclaudian,
That sooth was hir descripcioun

Of al the hevenès regioun,
As fer as that I saw the preve;

Therfor I can hem now beleve.
With that this egle gan to crye:

'Lat be,' quod he, 'thy fantasye;

419. F B *mochil*.
464. *Boece*, cp. Boethius, *De Consolatione
Philosophie*, bk. iv. met. i.

476. F B *Nas never*; Th. *Nas me never*.
477. *Marcian*, Martianus Mineus Felix

Capella, the 8th book, l. 857, of whose *De
Nuptiis inter Mercurium et Philologiam* is
quoted by Copernicus in support of his system of
astronomy; cp. also *March. Tale*, l. 1732 ff.

478. *Antecclaudian*, 'Anticlaudianus', a Latin
poem by Alanus de Insulis; cp. *P. of F.* l. 316.

480. P omits this line.

Wilt thou lere of sterrés aught ?
 'Nay, certeynly,' quod I, 'right naught.'
 'And why?' 'For I am now to old.'
 'Ellés wolde I thee have told,'
 Quod he, 'the sterrés namés, lo,
 And al the hevenés signes ther to, 490
 And which they been.' 'No fors,' quod
 I.

'Yis, pardee,' quod he, 'wostow why ?
 For whan thou redest poetrye,
 How goddés gonné stellifye
 Brid, fish, beste, or him, or here,
 As the Raven or eyther Bere,
 Or Arionés harpé fyn,
 Castor, Pollux, or Delphyn,
 Or Atlantés doughtrés sevene,
 How allé these are set in hevене ; 500
 For though thou have hem ofte on
 honde,

Yet nostonw not wher that they stonde.'
 'No fors,' quod I, 'hit is no nede,
 As wel I leve, so God me spede,
 Hem that write of this matere,
 As though I knew hir places here ;
 An eke they shynen here so brighte
 Hit shuldé shenden al my sighte,
 To loke on hem.' 'That may wel be,'
 Quod he. And so forth bar he me 510
 A whil, and than he gan to crye,
 That never herde I thyng so hye,
 'Now up the heed ; for al is wel ;
 Seynt Julian, lo, bon hostel !
 See here the Hous of Famé, lo !
 Maistow not herén that I do ?'
 'What ?' quod I. 'The greté soun,'
 Quod he, 'that rumbleth up and doun
 In Famés Hous, ful of tidynges,
 Bothe of fair speche and chidynges, 520
 And of fals and soth compounded.
 Herkne wel ; hit is not rouned.
 Herestow not the greté swogh ?'
 'Yis, pardee,' quod I, 'wel y-nogh.'
 'And what soun is it lyk ?' quod he.
 'Peter ! betyng of the see,'

496. *eyther Bere*, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor.

497. *Arionés harpe*, cp. *Fasti*, ii. 82.

498. *Delphyn*, the dolphin.

499. *Atlantes doughtrés*, the Pleiades.

514. *Seynt Julian*, St. Julian, patron of hospitality ; cp. *C.T.* Prol. i. 340.

520. P Cx. Th. *and of other thynges*.

Quod I, 'again the rochés holowe,
 Whan tempest doth the shippés swalowe,
 And lat a man stonde, out of doute,
 A mylé thens, and here hit route. 530
 Or ellés lyke the last humblynge
 After the clappe of a thundrynge.
 When Iovés hath the air y-bete ;
 But hit doth me for feré swete.

'Nay, dred thee not therof,' quod he,
 'Hit is nothyng wil beten thee,
 Thou shalt non harm have twerély.'

And with this word bothe he and I
 As nygh the place arryvéd were
 As men may casten with a spere. 540
 I nysté how, but in a strete
 He setté me faire on my fete,
 And seyde, 'Walké forth a pas,
 And tak thyn aventure or cas,
 That thou shalt fynde in Famés place.'

'Now,' quod I, 'whil we han space
 To speke, or that I go fro thee,
 For the love of God, tel me,
 In sooth, that wil I of thee lere,
 If this noisé that I here 550
 Be, as I have herd thee tellen,
 Of folk that doun in erthé dwellen,
 And cometh here in the samé wyse
 As I thee herde or this devyse ;
 And that there lyvés body nys
 In al that hous that yonder is,
 That maketh al this loudé fare ?'
 'No,' quod he, 'by Seynté Clare !
 And, also wis God redé me,
 But o thinge I wil warné thee, 560
 Of the which thou wolt have wonder.
 Lo, to the House of Famé yonder,
 Thou wost now how cometh every
 speche,

Hit nedeth noght eft thee to teche.
 But understond now right wel this,
 Whan any speche y-comen is
 Up to the paleys, anon-right
 Hit wexeth lyk the samé wyght,
 Which that the word in erthé spak,
 Be he clothéd reed or blak ; 570

536. Th. B *biten* ; Cx. *greue*.

549. P Cx. Th. *I wil*.

552. P Cx. *forth for doun*.

558. *Seynte Clare*, a disciple of St. Francis, whose day is Aug. 12th.

And hath so verray his lyknesse, 571
That spak the word, that thou wilt gesse
That it the samé body be,
Man or woman, he or she.
And is not this a wonder thyng?'
'Yis,' quod I tho, 'by hevené kyng!'

576. P *hevenes*.

And with this worde, 'Farewel,' quod
he,
'And here I wol abyden thee,
And God of hevené sende thee grace,
Som good to lernén in this place.' 580
And I of him took leve anon,
And gan forth to the paleys goon.

THIRD BOOK

(The Invocation)

O GOD of science and of light,
Apollo, through thy greté myght,
This lytel lasté book thou gye!
Nat that I wilné, for maistrýe
Here art poetical be shewed;
But, for the rym is light and lewed,
Yit make hit sumwhat agreable,
Thogh som vers faile in a sillable;
And that I do no diligence,
To shewé craft, but o sentence. 10
And if, divyné vertu, thou
Wilt helpé me to shewé now
That in myn hede y-markéd is,—
Lo, that is for to menén this,
The Hous of Fame for to descryve,—
Thou shalt see me go as blyve
Unto the nexté laure I see,
And kisse it, for hit is thy tree.
Now entreth in my breste anon!

(The Dream)

Whan I was fro this egly goon, 20
I gan beholde upon this place.
And certein, or I ferther pace,
I wol yow al thys shap devyse
Of hous and site; and al the wyse
How I gan to this place aproche,
That stood upon so high a roche,
Hyer stant there noon in Spayne.
But up I clomb with allé payne,
And though to clymbe it grevedé me,
Yit I ententif was to see, 30
And for to pouren wonder lowe,
If I coude any weyès know

6. P Cx. *But the ryme that is so lewed*.
10. P Cx. omit o.

What maner stoon this roché was;
For hit was lyk alynéd glas,
But that hit shoon ful moré clere;
But of what congeléd matere
Hit was, I nysté redély.
But at the laste espiéd I,
And found that hit was everydeel
A roche of yse, and not of steel. 40
Thoughte I, 'By Seynt Thomas of Kent!
This were a feble foundément,
To bilden on a placé hye;
He oughte him litel glorifyé
That her-on bilt, so God me save!'
Tho saw I al the half y-grave
With famous folkés namés fele,
That hadde y-been in mochel welc,
And her famés wide y-blowe.
But wel unethés coude I knowe 50
Any lettrés for to rede
Hir namés by; for, out of drede,
They were almost of-thowéd so,
That of the lettrés oon or two
Were molte away of every name.
So unfamous was wexe hir fame;
But men seyn, 'What may ever laste?'

Tho gan I in myn herté caste,
That tney were molte away with hete,
And not away with stormés beté. 60
For on that other syde I sey
Of this hill, that northward lay,
How hit was written full of names
Of folk that hadden greté fames
Of oldé tyme, and yit they were

34. P *alynde*; Cx. Th. *a lymed*; F B *a thyng of*. I read *alyned* (=aligned, i.e. placed in lines).

35. P *shewen mor*; Cx. *shewed more*.

41. *Seynt Thomas*, Thomas à Becket.

53. P Cx. *ouerthowéd*.

64. P *hedd a fer*; Cx. Th. *had afore*.

As fresshe as men had write hem here
 The selvè day right, or that houre
 That I upon hem gan to poure
 But wel I wistè what hit made;
 Hit was conservèd with the shade, 70
 Of a castel stood on hy,
 Al the writynge that I sy;
 And stood eek on so cold a place,
 That hetè myghte it not deface.

Tho gan I up the hill to goon,
 And fond upon the coppe a woon,
 That alle the men that ben on lyve
 Ne han the cunnyng to descryve
 The beautee of that ilke place,
 Ne coudè casten no compace 80
 Swich another for to make,
 That myghte of beautee be his make;
 Ne so wonderliche y-wrought,
 That hit astonyeth yit my thought,
 And maketh al my wyt to swynke
 On this castel for to thyнке.
 So that the gretè craft, beautee,
 The caste, the curiositee
 Ne can I not to yow devyse,
 My wyt ne may me not suffice. 90

But nathèles al the substance
 I have yit in my remembrance;
 For-why me thoughtè, by Seynt Geyle!
 Al was of stone of beryle,
 Bothe the castel and the tour,
 And eek the halle, and every bour,
 Wythouten pecès or ioynynges.
 But many subtil compassynges,
 Babèwynnès and pynacles,
 Imageries and tabernacles, 100
 I saw eek, and ful of wyndowes,
 As flakès falle in gretè snowes.
 And eek in ech of the pynacles
 Werèn sondry habitacles,
 In whichè stodèn al withoute—
 Ful the castel, al aboute—
 Of allè maner of mynstrales,

71. F B Th. invert the order of this and the next line. P Cx. Th. insert *that so* before *stood*; B inserts *that*.

87. F B omit *craft*; P Cx. Th. insert it wrongly in the next line.

99. F *Rabewvures*; B *Rabewynnes*; Cx. *As babewvures*; Th. *As babewries*; P *Babewvuries*. Skeat rightly reads *Babewvines* (O.F. *babuin*, L. Lat. *babewynnus*, Mod. Engl. *baboon*); used of grotesque figures in architecture.

And gestiours, that tellèn tales
 Bothe of weping and of game,
 Of al that longeth unto Fame. 110

Ther herde I pleyèn on an harpe
 That sownèd bothè wel and sharpe,
 Orpheus ful craftely,
 And on his sydè fastè by
 Sat the harper Orion
 And Eacidès Chiron,
 And other harpers many oon.
 And the Bret Glascurioun,
 And smalè harpers with her gleès,
 Seten under hem in seès, 120
 And gonne on hem upward to gape,
 And countrefet hem as an ape,
 Or as craft countrefeteth kynde.

Tho saw I stonden hem behynde,
 A-fer fro hem, alle be himselve,
 Many thousand tymès twelve,
 That madèn loudè menstralcyes
 In cornémuscè, and shalmyes,
 And many other maner pipe,
 That craftely begunne to pipe, 130
 Bothe in doucet and in rede,
 That ben at festès with the brede,
 And many floute and lilyng hornè,
 And pipès made of grenè corne,
 As han thise litel herde-gromes,
 That kepèn bestès in the bromes.

Ther saw I than dan Cytherus,
 And of Athenes dan Proserus,
 And Marcia that lost hir skyn,
 Bothe in face, body, and chyn, 140

112. P Cx. Th. omit *bothe*.

113. P inserts *And*, Cx. Th. insert *Hym* before *Orpheus*. Perhaps the original copy read *Dan Orpheus*, and the first word had become illegible.

115. *Orion*, Arion; cp. bk. ii. l. 497.

116. *Eacidès Chiron*, i.e. Achilles' Chiron: Chiron, the centaur, was tutor to Achilles, son of Æacus; cp. Ovid, *Ars Am.* i. 17, *Æacidae Chiron*.

118. *Bret Glascurioun*, the British Glasgerion; cp. Percy Folio MS. ed. Hales and Furnivall, i. 246.

128. *cornémuscè*, a bagpipe. *shalmye*, a shawm, from Lat. 'calamus,' a reed.

137. F B invert this and the next line.

137. F B *Atiteris* for *dan Cytherus*, both perhaps corruptions for *dan Tityrus*.

138. F B *dan Pseustis*; P *dan presentus*. All three readings are corrupt.

139. *Marcia*, Dante's Marsia (*Parad.* i. 13-27), i.e. Marsyas the male flute-player; cp. *Metamorphoses*, vi. 382-400.

For that she wolde envýn lo !
To pipen bet than Apolló.

There saw I famous, olde and yonge,
Pipers of the Duché tonge,
To lerné lovè-dauncés, sprynges,
Reyès, and these straungè thynges.

Tho saw I in another place,
Stondén in a largè space
Of hem that makén bloody soun,
In trumpè, beme, and clarioun ; 150
For in fight and blod-shedyng
Is uséd gladly clarionyng.

Ther herde I trumpén Messenus,
Of whom that spekethe Virgilius.

Ther herde I Joab trumpe also,
Theodomas, and other mo ;
And al that uséde clarion,
In Cataloigne and Aragon,
That in hir tymè famous were
To lerné, saw I trumpè thés. 160

Ther saw I sit in other scés,
Pleyinge upon othere gleés,
Whichè that I cannot nevène,
Mo than sterréd been in hevène,
Of whiche I nyl as now not ryme,
For ese of yow, and losse of tyme :
For tyme y-lost, this knowén ye,
By no way may recoveréd be.

Ther saw I pleyén jogelours,
Magiciens, and tregetours, 170
And phitonesses, charmcresses,
Oldé wycches, sorceresses,
That use exorsisaciouns,
And eek thise fumygaciouns ;
And clerkés eek, which connè wel
Al this magik naturel,

146. *Reyes*, round dances, from Dut. 'rey'; cp. Ger. 'Reihentanz,' a circular dance.

150. *beme*, a horn, trumpet.

153. *Messenus*, Misenus, son of Æolus, trumpeter first to Hector and then to Æneas; cp. *Æn.* iii. 239 and vi. 162 ff.

155. *Joab*, cp. 2 Sam. ii. 28 ; xviii. 16 ; xx. 22.

156. *Theodomas*, Thiodamas, augur in succession to Amphiarus at the siege of Thebes; cp. Statius, *Thebaid* viii. 343, and *March. Tale*, l. 1720 ff.

162. F B *sondry* for *othere*; Th. *other sondry*.

169. *jogelours* played, sang, danced, and performed tricks by sleight of hand.

170. *tregetours* performed more elaborate tricks requiring mechanical contrivances.

171. *phitonesses*, pythonesses; cp. *Freres Tale*, l. 1510.

174. P omit this line.

That craftély don hir ententes,
To make, in certeyn ascendentes,
Imagés, lo, through swych magik,
To make a man ben hool or syk. 180

Ther saw I thec quene Medea,
And Circés eek, and Calipsa ;
Ther saw I Hermes Ballenus,
Lymote, and eek Symon Magus.
Ther saw I, and knew hem by name,
That by such art don men han fame.
Ther saw I Colle tregetour
Upon a table of sicamour
Pleye an uncouth thyng to telle ;
I saw him carien a wynd-melle 190
Under a walsh-noté shale.

What shulde I makè lenger tate
Of al the peple that I say,
Fro hennés unto domèsday ?

Whan I hadde al this folk beholde,
And fond me lous, and noght y-holde,
And eft y-muséd longé while
Upon these wallés of berile,
That shoon ful lighter than a glas,
And made wel moré than hit was, 200
To semén, every thyng, y-wis,
As kyndé thyng of Famés is ;
I gan forth romen til I fond
The castel-yate on my right hond,
Which that so wel corvén was,
That never swich another nas ;
And yit it was by aventure
Y-wrought, as often as by cure.

178. *ascendentes*. The ascendent is that point of the zodiac ascending above the horizon at a given time. It was a factor of great importance in calculating nativities.

181. *Medea*, the wife of Jason.

182. *Circés*, Circe; cp. *Odyssey* x. *Calipsa*, Calypso; cp. *Odyssey* i.

183. *Hermes Ballenus*. Belinuous, the disciple of Hermes. Belinuous discovered beneath a statue of Hermes a book explaining the secrets of the universe. *Hermes* is here in the possessive case.

184. *Lymote*, Elymas the sorcerer (Acts xiii. 8), according to Prof. Hale's. *Symon Magus*; cp. Acts viii. 9.

187. *Colle tregetour*, Colle the juggler, a now unknown celebrity.

194. Cx. Th. *I could not telle tyl domesday*.

197. P *lengur a whyle*, perhaps rightly; Cx. *a lenger whyle*.

201. P omits this line; Cx. Th. also omit but insert the line *And thenne anon after this* after l. 202.

208. Cx. Th. *Ywrought by grete and subtil cure*.

I lit nedeth noght yow for to tellen,
 To maké yow to lenger duellen, 210
 Of this yatés florisschynges,
 Ne of compassés, ne of kervynges,
 Ne how they hatte in masoneries,
 As corbets, ful of ymageriés.
 But, Lord ! so fair it was to shewe
 For hit was al of gold behewe.
 But in I wente, and that anoon ;
 Ther mette I crying many oon,—
 ‘ A largés, largés ! uphold wel !
 God save the lady of this pel, 220
 Our owné gentil lady Fame,
 And hem that wilne to have a name
 Of us ! ’ Thus herde I crien alle,
 And fasté comén out of halle,
 And shokén noblès and sterlynges.
 And sommé crounéd were as kynges,
 With crouncés wroght ful of losenges ;
 And many riban, and many frenches
 Were on hir clothes trewely.

Tho atté laste aspyèd I 230
 That pursévauntés and heraudes,
 That crien riché folkés laudes,
 Hit weren alle ; and every man
 Of hem, as I yow tellén can,
 Hadde on him throwén a vesture,
 Which that men clepe a cote-armure,
 Enbrowdéd wonderliché riche,
 Al-though they neré nought y-liche.
 But noght nyl I, so mote I thryve,
 Been abouté to dyscryve 240
 Al this armés that ther weren,
 That they thus on hir cotés beren,
 For hit to me were impossible ;
 Men myghte make of hem a bible,
 Twenty foot thikke, as I trowe.
 For certeyn, who-so coude y-knowe
 Myghte ther allé the armés seen,
 Of famous folk that haddé been
 In Auffrike, Europe, and Asye,
 Sith first began the chevalrye. 250

Lo ! how shulde I now telle al this ?

213. P Cx. Th. *how the hackyng in*.
 214. P Cx. Th. *and for ful of*.
 219. F B Th. *holde up* ; P Cx. Th. repeat *a*
 before second *largés*.
 227. P Cx. *full of lesynges*.
 228. P *and moy thynges* ; Cx. *and many*
thynges.
 250. P Cx. Th. *lo for began the*.

Ne of the halle eek what nede is
 To tellén yow that every wal
 Of hit, and floor, and roof wyth al,
 Was plated half a foté thikke
 Of gold, and that nas no thyng wikke,
 But, for to prove in allé wyse,
 As fyn as ducat of Venyse,
 Of whiche to litel in my pouche is ?
 And they were set as thikke of nouchis
 Fulle of the synest stonés faire, 261
 That men rede in the Lapidaire,
 As gresés growén in a mede.
 But hit were al to longe to rede
 The namés ; and therfore I pace.
 But in this ryché lusty place,
 That Famés hallé calléd was,
 Ful moché prees of folke ther nas,
 Ne croudyng, for to moché prees.
 But al on hye, upon a dees, 270
 Sitte in a see imperial,
 That maad was of a rubec al,
 Which that a carbuncle is y-called,
 I saw perpetually y-stalled,
 A femynyné creature ;
 That never forméd by nature
 Nas swich another thyng y-seye.
 For altherfirst, soth for to seye,
 Me thoughté that she was so lyte,
 That the lengthe of a cubite 280
 Was longer than she semedé be ;
 But thus sone in a whilé she
 Hir-self tho wonderliché streighte,
 That with hir feet she therthé reighte,
 And with hir heed she touchéd hevene,
 Ther as shyne the sterrés sevene.
 And therto eek, as to my wyt,
 I saw as gret a wonder yit,
 Upon hir eyén to beholde,
 But certeyn I hem never tolde. 290

259. P Th. *to lite al in* ; Cx. *to lyte in* ; F *to litel al*.

260. P Cx. *as ouches*.

271. P Cx. *on for in*.

272. P omits *al* ; Cx. Th. *Ryal (royal) for al*.

277. P Cx. omit *Nas* ; Th. *Was*.

283. F B *This was gret marvaylle to me*.

284. F *Hir tho so wonderly streight* ; B *Hir tho so wondirlich streight* ; P Cx. Th. *wonderly for wonderliche*. The original of F B probably read :—

This was gret marvaylle to me, she

Hir tho so wonderliche streighte,

which is perhaps the right reading.

For as fele eyen haddé she,
 As fetherés upon foulés be,
 Or werén on the bestés soure,
 That goddés troné gunne honoure,
 As writ John in the Apocalips.
 Iir heer that oundy was and crips,
 As burnéd gold shoon for to see.
 And sooth to tellén also, she
 Had also fele up-stondyng ercs
 And tonges, as on a best ben heres; 300
 And on hir feet wexen saw I
 Partrichés wingès redély.

But, lord! the perrie and the richesse
 I saw sittyng on this godesse!
 And, lord! the hevenysh melodye,
 Of songés ful of armonye,
 I herde aboute her trone y-songe,
 That al the paleys-wallés ronge!
 So song the myghty Musé, she
 That clepéd is Caliopee, 310
 And hir cighté sustrén eek
 That in her facé semén meke;
 And evermo, eternally
 They syngé of Fame as tho herde I:—
 ‘Heriéd be thou and thy name,
 Goddesse of renoun and of fame.’

Tho was I war, lo, atté laste,
 As I myn eyén gan up caste,
 That this ilké noblé queene
 On hir shuldrés gan sustene 320
 Bothé tharmés, and the name
 Of tho that haddé largé fame;
 Alexander, and Hercules
 That with a sherté his lyf lees!
 Thus fond I sittyng this goddesse,
 In nobley honour and richesse;
 Of which I stynte a whilé now,
 Other thyng to tellén yow.

Tho saw I stonde on either syde,
 Streight down to the dorés wyde, 330
 Fro the dees many a pileer
 Of metal, that shoon not ful cleer,
 But though they nere of no rychesse,
 Yet they were maad for greet noblesse,

277. P Cx. insert *as* before *for*; F B Th. *hit shoon to see*.

300. F B *as on bestes heres*.

321. F B P Cx. *Both (Bothe) armes*.

325. All read *And thus*.

329. P Cx. Th. *on thother*.

And in hem hy and greet sentence;
 And folk of digné reverence,
 Of whiche I wol yow tellé fonde,
 Upon the piler saw I stonde.

Alderfirst, lo, ther I sigh,
 Upon a piler stonde on high, 340
 That was of lede and yren fyn,
 Him of secté Saturnyn,
 The Ebräyk Josephus the olde,
 That of Jewés gestés tolde;
 And bar upon his shuldrés hye,
 The fame up of the Iewérye.
 And by him stoden othere sevene,
 Wyse and werthy for to nevene,
 To helpen him bere up the charge,
 Iit was so hevy and so large. 350
 And for they writen of batailes,
 As wel as of othere mervailles,
 Therfor was, lo, this pileer,
 Of which that I yow telle heer,
 Of lede and yren bothe, y-wys.
 For yren Martés metal is,
 Which that god is of bataille;
 And the leed, withouten faile,
 Is, lo, the metal of Saturne,
 That hath ful largé wheel to turne. 360
 Tho stoden forth on every rowe
 Of hem which that I couldé knowe,
 Thogh I hem noght be ordré telle,
 To maké you to long to dwelle.

These, of whiche I gynné rede,
 There saw I stonden, out of drede:
 Upon an yren piler strong,
 That peyntéd was, al endélong,
 With tigrés blode in every place,
 The Tholosan that highté Stace, 370
 That bar of Thebés up the name
 Upon his shuldrés, and the fame

335. All omit *hy and*, which, however, Th. wrongly inserts in the next line; P and Cx. alter *hy and* in l. 336 into *gret and* by contamination with the previous line.

342. P omits this line; Cx. *Hym that wrote thactes dynyne*.

347. P Cx. *ther stoden sevene*.

352. F B *as othere olde mervayles*.

367. P omits this line; Cx. *a fyler hye and stronge*.

369. *tigrés blode*; cp. *Thebaid*, bk. vii. The killing of two lions by the besiegers caused a renewal of the siege.

370. *The Tholosan . . . Stace*. According to Dante, Statius was a native of Toulouse. He was born at Naples A.D. 61.

Also of cruel Achillés.
 And by him stood, withoutén lees,
 Ful wonder hye on a pileer
 Of yren, he, the greeté Omere ;
 And with him Dares and Tytus
 Before, and eek he, Lollius,
 And Guydo eek de Columpnis,
 And English Gaufride eek, y-wys. 380
 And ech of these, as have I joye,
 Was besy for to bere up Troye.
 So hevy was therof the fame,
 That for to bere hit was no game.
 But yit I gan ful wel espie,
 Betwix hem was a litel envye.
 Oon seyde that Omere madé lyes,
 Feynynge in his poetries,
 And was to Grekés favorable ;
 Therfor held he hit but fable. 390

Tho saw I stonde on a pileer,
 That was of tynnéd yren cleer,
 Thát Latyn poete Virgile,
 That hath boren up longé while
 The fame of Pius Eneas.

And next him on a piler was,
 Of coper, Venus clerk, Ovyde,
 That hath y-sowen wonder wyde
 The greté god of Love his fame.
 And ther he bar up wel his name, 400
 Upon this piler, also hye,
 As I hit myghte see with myn ye :
 For-why this halle of whiche I rede
 Was woxe on highte, lengthe and brede,
 Wel moré, by a thousand dele,
 Than hit was erst, that saw I wel.

Thoo saw I on a piler by,
 Of yren wrought ful sternely,

377. *Dares and Tytus*, Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis, the reputed authors of two late histories of the Trojan War.

378. *Lollius*, probably a misunderstanding on Chaucer's part of Horace, *Epist.* i. 2 : -

'Troiani belli scriptorem, maxime Lolli.
 Dum tu declamas Roma, Preneste relegi.'

379. *Guydo . . . de Columpnis*, Guido delle Colonne, whose *Historia Troiana* (1287) is a translation of Benoit de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie*. The M.E. *Geste Hystoriale* (E. E. T. S.) is a translation of the *Historia*.

380. *English Gaufride*, Geoffrey of Monmouth, author of the *Historia Britonum*.

387. So Th. ; F B omit *that* and read *was* for *made*; Cx. P read *Other* for *Oon*.

394. F B *bore hath up longe*; P Cx. Th. *hath bore up a longe*.

The greté poete, dan Lucan,
 And on his shuldres bar up than, 410
 As highe as that I myghte see,
 The fame of Julius, and Pompee.
 And by him stodén alle these clerkes,
 That write of Romés myghty werkes,
 That if I wolde her namés telle,
 Alle to longé moste I dwelle.

And next him on a piler stood,
 Of soulfre, lyk as he were wood,
 Dan Claudian, soth for to telle,
 That bar up al the fame of helle, 420
 Of Pluto, and of Proserpyne,
 That quene is of the derké pyne.

What shulde I moré telle of this ?

The hallé was al ful, y-wys,
 Of hem that writen oldé gestes,
 As ben on treés rokés nestes ;
 But it is a ful confus matere
 Were al the gestés for to here,
 That they of write, and how they highte.
 But whil that I beheld this sighte, 430
 I herde a noise aprochén blyve,
 That ferde as been don in an hyve,
 Ayenst her tyme of out-comynge ;
 Right swiche a maner murmureng,
 For al the world hit semedé me.

Tho gan I loke aboute and see,
 That ther com entryng into the halle,
 A right greet company withalle,
 And that of sondry regions,
 Of allé kynnes condiciouns, 440
 That dwelle in crthe under the mone,
 Pore and riche. And also sone
 As they were come into the halle,
 They gonné down on kneés falle,
 Before this ilké noble quene,
 And seyde, 'Graunte us, lady shene,
 Eche of us, of thy grace, a bone !'
 And somme of hem she grauntéde sone,
 And somme she wernedé wel and faire ;

409. *Lucan*, author of the *Pharsalia*, which describes the war between Caesar and Pompey.

419. *Claudian*; cp. *supra*, bk. i. l. 449 note.

427. P Cx. invert this and the next line.

433. F B *out-fleyng*.

440. F *alle skynnes*; B *all skynys*; Cx. *alle kyns*; Th. *al kyns*.

444. P. *They gonne wy on knees down falle*, which is probably a corruption of the true reading; perhaps *They gonne ny on knees down falle*; Cx. Th. *They gonne (gan) on knees down falle*.

And somme she grauntede the contraire 450
Of her axyng utterly.

But this I seye yow trewely,
What hir causé was, I nyste.
For of this folk ful wel I wyste,
They haddé good fame ech deservéd,
Although they were diversly servéd.
Right as hir suster, dame Fortune,
Is wont to servén in comune.

Now herkné how she gan to paye
That gonne hir of hir gracé praye; 460
And yit lo, al this companye
Scyden sooth, and noght a lye.

‘Madame,’ scyden they, ‘we be
Folk that hecr besechen thee,
That thou graunte us now good fame,
And let our werkén han that name.
In ful recompensacioun
Of goodé werkes, yive us renoun.’

‘I werne hit yow,’ quod she, anon,
‘Ye gete of me good famé noon, 470
By god! and therfor go your wey.’

‘Allas,’ quod they, ‘and welaway!
Telle us what your cause may be.’

‘For me list hit noght,’ quod she,
‘No wyght shal speke of yow, y-wys,
Good ne harm, ne that ne this.’
And with that word she gan to calle
Her messenger that was in halle,
And bad that he shulde fasté goon,
Upon peyne to be blynde anon, 480
For Eolus, the god of wynde,
‘In Tracé ther ye shul him finde,
And bid him bringe his clarioun,
That is ful dyvers of his soun,
And hit is clepéd Clere Laude,
With which he wonte is to heraude
Hem that me list y-preised be:
And also bid him how that he
Brynge his other clarioun,
That highté Sclaundre in every toun, 490

451. P Cx. omit this and the next line.

453. P Cx. *What ther grace was*; Th. *What her grace was*.

456. F B omit this line.

466. P Cx. Th. *good name*.

480. A line is left blank here in F B. The next two lines read:

Upon the peyn to be blynde,
For Eolus, the god of wynde.

42. P omits this line.

With which he wont is to diffame
Hem that me liste, and do hem shame.’

This messenger gan fasté goon,
And found wher in a cave of stoon,
In a contree that highté Trace,
This Eolus, with hardé grace,
Held the wyndés in distresse,
And gan hem under him to presse,
That they gonne as herés rore,
He bond and presséde hem so sore. 500

This messenger gan fasté crie,
‘Ris up,’ quod he, ‘and fasté hye,
Til thou at my lady be;
And tak thy clarioun eek with thee,
And speed thee fast.’ And he anon
Took to a man that hight Triton,
His clariouns to beré tho,
And leet a certeyn wynd to go,
And blew so hidously and hye,
That hit ne lefté not a skye 510
In al the welken longe and brood.

This Eolus no-wher abood,
Til he was come at Famés feet,
And eek the man that Triton heet;
And ther he stood as still as stoon.
And her-withal ther com anon
Another hugé companye
Of oldé folk and gunné crie,
‘Lady, graunte us now good fame
And lat our werkén han that name, 520
Now in honour of gentillesse,
And also God your soule blesse!
For we han wel deservéd hit,
Therfor is right that we ben quyt.’

‘As thryve I,’ quod she, ‘ye shal faile,
Good werkés shal yow noght availe
To have of me good fame as now.
But wite ye what? I graunté yow,
That ye shal have a shrewéd name,
And wikkéd loos and worsé fame, 530
Though ye good loos have wel deservéd.
Now go your wey, for ye be servéd;
And thou, dan Eolus,’ quod she,
‘Tak forth thy trompe anon, let see,

503. So all the authorities.

505. F B *forth* for *fast*.

506. *Triton*; cp. Ovid, *Met.* i. 333.

518. F B Th. *gode* for *olde*.

534. F B

Have doon, Eolus, let see,
Take forth thy trompe anon, quod she.

That is y-clepéd Sclaunder light,
And blow hir loos, that every wyght
Speke of hem harm and shrewédnesse,
In stede of good and worthynesse.
For thou shalt **trump** al the contraire
Of that they han don wel and faire.' 540

'Alas,' thoughte I, 'what aventures
Han these sory creatures,
That they amongés al the pres,
Shulde thus be shaméd giltéles !
But what ! hit mostè nedés be.'

What dide this Eolus, but he
Took out his blakkè trompe of bras,
That fouler than the devil was,
And gan this trompè for to blowe,
As al the world shulde overthrowe. 550

Throughouten every regioun
Wente this foulè trumpès soun,
As swift as pelet out of gonne,
Whan fyr is in the poudrè ronnc.
And swiche a smokè gan out-wende,
Out of his foulè trumpès ende,
Blak, blo, grenysh, swartysh, reed,
As doth when that men meltè leed,
Lo, al on hye fro the tuél !
And therto oo thing saw I wel, 560
That the ferther that hit ran,
The gretter wexèn hit began,
As doth the ryver from a welle,
And hit stank as the pit of helle.
Allas, thus was her shame y-ronge,
And giltélees, on every tonge.

Tho com the thriddè companye,
And gunne up to the dees, hye,
And doun on knees they file anon,
And seyde, they ben everychon 570
Folk that han ful trewely
Deservéd famè rightfully,
And prayè that hit myghte be knowe,
Right as hit is, and forth y-blowe.
'I grauntè,' quod she, 'for me list
That now your godè werkes be wist ;
And yit ye shul han better loos,

Right in dispit of alle your foos,
Than worthy is ; and that anoon :
Lat now,' quod she, 'thy trumpè goon,
Thou Eolus, that is so blak ; 581
And out thyn other trompè tak
That hightè Laude, and blow it so
That through the world her fame go,
Al esèly and not to faste,
That hit be knowèn attè laste.'

'Ful gladly, lady myn,' he seyde ;
And out his trompe of golde he brayde
Anon, and sette hit to his mouthè,
And blew it est, and west, and southe, 590
And north, as loude as any thunder,
That every wyght hath of hit wonder,
So brode hit ran or that hit stente.
And, certès, al the breeth that wente
Out of his trumpès mouthè smelde
As men a pot of bawmè helde
Among a basket ful of roses ;
This favour dide he to her loses.

And right with this I gan aspye,
Ther com the ferthè companye,— 600
But certeyn they were wonder fewe,—
And gonnè stondèn in a rewe,
And seyden, 'Certès, lady brighte,
We han don wel wyth al our myghte,
But we ne kepèn have no fame.
Hid our werkès and our name,
For goddès love ! for certès we
Han certeyn doon hit for bountee,
And for no maner other thyng.'
'I grauntè yow al your askyng,' 610
Quod she ; 'let alle your werkes be deed.

With that aboute I clew myn heed,
And saw anoon the fiftè route
That to this lady gonnè loute,
And doun anoon on kneès falle ;
And hir tho besoughtèn alle,
To hide hir goodè werkès eek,
And seyde, they yevèn noght a leek
For famè, ne for swich renoun ;
For they for contemplacioun, 620

553. P Cx. Th. insert *a* before *pelet* and *gonne*.

554. P Cx. *fire* is in to it *ronne*.

558. P Cx. omit *that* ; F B Th. *wher that*.

568. Cx. on *hye* ; F B Th. to *hye*.

570. F B Th. *we* for *they*.

573. F B *praye* yow it *not* be ; Cx. *prayed* hyt
myght ; Th. *prayed* you it *might*.

575. P Cx. Th. insert *now* before *me*.

578. F B omit *Right*.

585. F B omit *Al*.

596. F B Th. *potte* ful ; P Cx. *pitte* ful. Koch
and Skeat omit *of*.

602. P Cx. Th. insert *to* before *stonden*.

612. P Cx. Th. *turned* for *clew*.

619. F B Th. *For no fame*. F B omit *ne*.
P Cx. Th. omit second *for*.

And goddès lovè, hadde y-wrought,
Ne of famè wolde they nought.

'What?' quod she, 'and be ye wood?
And wenè ye for to do good,
And for to have of that no fame?
Have ye dispit to have my name?
Nay, ye shul lyvèn everychoon!
Blow thy trompe and that anon,'
Quod she, 'thou Eolus, I hote,
And ryng thise folkès werk by note, 630
That al the world may of hit here.'
And he gan blowe hir loos so clere,
In his golden clarioun,
That through the world wentè the soun,
And so kenely, and eek so softe,
That hir fame was blowen a-lofte.

Tho com the sextè companye,
And gan fastè to Famè crie.
Right verrailly in this manere
They seyden: 'Mercy, lady dere! 640
To tellè certeyn as hit is,
We han don neither that ne this,
But ydel al our lyf hath be.
But, nathèles, we preyè thec,
That we may have so good a fame,
And gret renoun and knowèn name,
As they that han don noblè gestes,
And achevèd alle hir lestes,
As wel of love as other thyng;
Al was us never broche ne ryng, 650
Ne ellès nought from wymmen sent,
Ne onès in hir herte y-ment,
To make us only frendly chere,
But myghtè temè us upon berc,
Yit lat us to the peple seme
Swiche as the world may of us deme
That wymmen lovèd us for wood.
Hit shal don us a mochè good,
And to our herte as moche availe
To countrepeise ese and travaile, 660

621. P Cx. Th. *it wrought*.

623. P Cx. Th. omit *and*.

624. P Cx. Th. omit *for*.

630. All read *werkes*—the plural form caught from the preceding word—cp. *hit* in next line.

635. P Cx. Th. *kyndely* for *kenely*; F B *Also* for *And so*.

636. P omits this line; F B *But atte last (atlaste) it was on lofte*; Cx. Th. *their* for *hir*.

645. F B *as good*; Th. *as good a*.

648. P Cx. *eshued alle her bestes*; Th. *acheued . . . questes*.

As we hadde wonne hit with labour;
For that is derè boght honour,
At regard of our greet ese.
And yit thou most us morè plese;
Let us be holden eek *therto*,
Worthy, wyse, and gode also,
And riche, and happy unto love.
For Goddès love that sit above,
Thogh we may not the body have
Of wymmen, yit, so God me save! 670
Let men glewe on us the name;
Sufficeth that we han the fame.'

'I grauntè,' quod she, 'by my trouthe!
Now, Eolus, withoutèn slouthe,
Tak out thy trompe of gold,' quod she,
'And blow as they have axèd me,
That every man wene hem at ese,
Though they gon in ful bad lese.'
This Eolus gan hit so blowe,
That through the world hit was y-knowe.

Tho com the seventh route anon, 681
And fel on kneès everychon,
And seyde, 'Lady, graunte us sone
The samè thyng, the samè boon,
Thát thise nextè folke have don.'

'Fy on yow,' quod she, 'everychoon!
Ye masty swyn, ye ydel wrecchès,
Ful of roten slowè tecchès!
What? falsè thevès! wher ye wolde
Be famous good, and nothing nolde 690
Deservè why, ne never thoughte
Men rather yow to-hangen oughte?
For ye be lyk the slepy cat,
That wolde have fish; but wastow what?
He woldè no-thing wete his clowes.
Yvel thrift come on your jowes,
And on myn if I hit graunte,
Or do yow favour yow to avaunte!
Thou Eolus, thou kyng of Tracc!
Go, blow thise folk a sory grace,' 700
Quod she, 'anon; and wostow how

675. F B read *now let se for quod she*.

685. A loose construction. Cx. reads *That to thise next folk hast done*, which is perhaps right.

689-691. F B read:

What? false thevès? or ye wolde
Be famous good, and nothing nolde
Deserve why, ne never ye roughte!
Men rather yow to-hangen oughte!

693. F *swynt for slepy*; B *sweynte*, rightly according to Skeat.

699. *Trage*, Thrace.

As I shal tellè thee right now.
 Sey, "Thise ben they that wolde honour
 Have, and do noskynnès labour,
 Ne do no good, and yit han laude;
 And that men wende that bele Isaude
 Ne coud hem noght of lovè werne;
 And yit she that grynt at a querne
 Is al to good to ese hir herte."

This Eolus anon up sterste, 710
 And with his blakkè clarioun
 He gan to blasen out a soun,
 As loude as belweth wynde in helle.
 And eek thérwith, sooth to telle,
 This soun was [al] so ful of japes,
 As ever mowès were in apes.
 And that wente al the world aboute,
 That every wyght gan on hem shoute,
 And for to laugh as they were wode;
 Such gamè fonde they in hir hode. 720

Tho com another companye,
 That had y-doone the trecherye,
 The harme, the grettest wikkednesse,
 That any hertè coudè gesse;
 And preyède hir to han good fame,
 And that she nolde doon hem no shame,
 But yewe hem loos and good renoun,
 And do hit blowe in clarioun.
 'Nay, wis!' quod she, 'hit were a vyce;
 Al be ther in me no justice, 730
 Me [ne] list not do hit now,
 Ne this nyl I not grauntè yow.'

Tho com ther lepyng in a route,
 And gan clappèn al aboute
 Every man upon the croune,
 That al the hallè gan to sowne,
 And seyde, 'Lady, lefe and dere,
 We ben swich folk as ye may here.
 To tellèn al the tale aright,
 We ben shrewès every wyght, 740
 And han delyt in wikkednes,
 As goodè folk have in goodnes;
 And joyè to be knowèn shrewes,
 And ful of vyce and wikkèd thewes;

705. P *hem* for *han*.

706. *Isaude*, Ysolt, the lover of Tristram; cp. *P. of F.* l. 290.

715. All omit *al*, which Skeat inserts. P reads *as*, which is a contraction of *also*.

723. All read *gret*, *gretle*; Willert reads *grettest*.

731. All omit *ne*. Cx. Th. read *to do*.

732. P *The nys* for *Ne this*; Cx. *Ne I ne wyl*; Th. *I nyl graunte it yow*.

Wherfor we preyen you, a-rowe,
 That our fame be swich y-knowe,
 In allè thyng right as hit is.'
 'I graunte hit yow,' quod she, 'y-wys.
 But what art thou that seyst this tale,
 That werest on thy hose a pale, 750
 And on thy tipet swiche a belle?'
 'Madamè,' quod he, 'sooth to telle,
 I am that ilkè shrewe, y-wys,
 That brende the temple of Isidis
 In Athenès, lo, that citee.'
 'And wherfor didest thou so?' quod she.
 'By my troth,' quod he, 'madame,
 I woldè fayn han had a fame,
 As other folk hadde in the tounce,
 Al-thogh they were of greet renoun 760
 For hir vertu and hir thewes,
 Thoughte I, as greet a fame han shrewes—
 Though hit be noght—for shrewèdnesse—
 As godè folk han for goodnesse;
 And sith I may not have that oon,
 That other nyl I noght forgoon.
 And for to gette of Famès hire,
 The temple sette I al a-fire.
 Now do our loos be blownen swythe,
 As wysly be thou ever blythe. 770
 'Gladly,' quod she. 'Thou Eolus,
 Herestow not what they prayen us?'
 'Madamè, yis, ful wel,' quod he,
 'And I wil trompen hit, parde!'
 And tok his blakke trumpè faste,
 And gan to puffen and to blaste,
 Til hit was at the worldès ende.

With that I gan aboutè wende,
 For oon that stood right at my bak,
 Me thoughtè goodly to me spak, 780
 And seyde, 'Frend, what is thy name?
 Artow come hider to han fame?'
 'Nay, for-sothè, frend!' quod I;
 'I cam noght hider, graunt mercy!
 For no swich causè, by my heed!
 Sufficeth me, as I were deed,
 That no wyght have my name in honde.
 I woot my-self best how I stonde,

753. P ends with this line.

754. *Isidis*, Isis. Chaucer refers to Herostatus, who set fire to the temple of Diana at Ephesus on the night of Alexander the Great's birth.

757. F B *thrift* for *troth*.

767. Cx. Th. *As for . . . a fame here*.

For what I drye or what I thynke,—
 I wol my selven al hit drynke, 790
 Certeyn for the moré part,
 As ferforth as I can myn art.
 What doost thou here than ?' quod he.
 Quod I, 'That wol I tellen the,
 The causé why I stondé here.
 Som newé tydyngs for to lere,
 Som newé thynges, I not what,
 Tydynges other this or that,
 Of love, or swiché thinges glade.
 For, certeynly, he that me made 800
 To comen hider, seyde me
 I shuldé bothé here and see,
 In this placé, wonder thynges ;
 But these be no swiche tydynges
 As I menté.' 'No ?' quod he.
 And I answerdé, 'No, parde !
 For wel I wysté ever yit,
 Sith that fust I haddé wit,
 That som folk han desired fame
 Dyversely, and loos and name ; 810
 But certeynly I nysté how,
 Ne, where that Famé dwelldé, er now ;
 And eek of hir descripcioun,
 Ne also hir condicioun,
 Ne the ordre of hir dom,
 Unto the tyme I hider com.'
 '[Which] than, be lo, these tidynges,
 That [thee] now [thus] hider brynges,
 That thou hast heid ?' quod he to me ;
 'But now, no fors ; for wel I see 820
 What thou desirest for to here.
 Com forth, and stond no lenger here,
 And I wol the, withouten drede,
 In swich another placé lede,
 Ther thou shalt heré many oon.'
 Tho gan I forth with him to goon,

793. F omits *than* and inserts *But before What*
 797. All read *thus, thinge*; read with Skeat
thynges.

805. F B I *mene of*; Th. I *ment of*.

807. All read *wote* for *wyste*.

816. Cx Th. *Knewe I not til*.

817-819. All read :

Why th in be, lo, these tydynges
 Th it thou now hider brynges
 That thou hast heid.

Skeat reads *Whiche for Whye than* and inserts
thus in l. 818; Koch reads :

Which than be, lo, these tydynges
 Th it bringe thee hider, and these thynges
 That thou wilt here.

Out of the castel, soth to seye.
 Tho saw I stonde in a valeye,
 Under the castel, fasté by,
 An hous, that *domus Dedali*, 830
 That *Laboryntus* clepd is,
 Nas maad so wonderlich y-wys,
 Ne half so queyntéliche y-wrought.
 And evermo, so swyft as thought,
 This queynté hous abouté wente,
 That nevermo hit stillé stente.
 And therout com so greet a noise,
 That had hit stonden upon Oise,
 Men myghte hit han herd esély
 To Rome, I trowé sikerly 840
 And the noise which that I herde,
 For al the world right so hit ferde,
 As doth the routyng of the stoon,
 That from thengyn is leten goon.

And al this hous of whiche I rede
 Was maad of twiggis, falwé, rede
 And grene eek, and som werén white,
 Swiche as men to these cages thwyte,
 Or makén of these panyers,
 Or ellis hottis or dossers ; 850
 But for the swough and for the twygges,
 This house was also ful of gigges,
 And also ful eek of chirkynges,
 And of many other werkynge ;
 And eek this hous hath of entrees
 As felc of leves as ben on trees
 In somer, whan they grené ben,
 And on the roof men may yit seen
 A thousand holés, and wel moo,
 To leten wel the soun out go. 860

And eek by day in every tyde
 Been al the dorés openéd wide,
 And by nyght echoon unshette ;
 Ne porter ther is non to lette
 No maner tydyngs in to pace ;

830 *domus Dedali*, the labyrinth made by
 Dædalus for Minos; cp. Ovid, *Met.* viii. 159 ff.

838 *Oise*, a northern tributary of the Seine.

839. F B Th. *Men*; Cx. *I*; probably the right
 reading is *Me* (=one); Th. *myghte han herd hit*.

850. F B Cx. *hottes*; Th. *hutches*; Skeat
 reads *hottes*.

851. F B Th. *That for But*.

854. So Cx. *lh.*, but certainly wrongly; B
 omits the line; F has only *As ful this lo*.

856. F B yn for *on*. B omits *as before ben*
 and inserts it before *of*; Cx. *As many as leues*
ben of trees; Th. *As many as leues ben on*
trees.

Ne never reste is in that place,
 That hit nys fild ful of tydynges,
 Other loude, or in whisprynges,
 And over alle the housés angles,
 Is ful of rounynges and of jangles, 870
 Of werres, of pees, of mariages,
 Of reste, of labour of viages,
 Of aboode, of deeth, of lyfe,
 Of love, of hate, acorde, of stryfe,
 Of loos, of lore, and of wynnynges,
 Of hele, of sekeness, of bilydynges,
 Of fairé wyndés, of tempestes,
 Of qwalme of folk, and eek of bestes ;
 Of dyvers transmutaciouns, 880
 Of estats and eek of regions ;
 Of trust, of drede, of jelousye,
 Of wyt, of wynnyng, of folye ;
 Of plentee, and of greet famyne,
 Of chepe, of derth, and of ruyné ;
 Of good or mysghovernement,
 Of fire, of dyvers accident.

And lo, this hous of whiche I write,
 Siker be ye, hit nas not lyte ;
 For hit was sixty myle of lengthe,
 Al was the tymber of no strengthe ; 890
 Yet hit was foundéd to endure
 Whil that hit list to Aventure,—
 That is the moder of tydynges,
 As the see of welles and sprynges,—
 And hit was shapén lyk a cage.

‘ Certés,’ quod I, ‘ in al myn age,
 Ne saw I swich a hous as this.’
 And as I wondréde me, y-wys,
 Upon this hous, tho war was I
 How that myn egle, fasté by, 900
 Was perched hye upon a stoon ;
 And I gan streighté to hym goon,
 And seyde thus : ‘ I preyé thee
 That thou a whil abidé me
 For Goddés love, and let me seen
 What wondrés in that placé been ;
 For yit paraunter I may lere

872. All *restes*.

876. Cx. Th. *lesynges* for *bilydynges*, perhaps rightly.

877. Cx. Th. *wether* and for *wyndes*.

877. All and *eek of tempestes*, caught from line below.

886. All and *of*.

891. F B Th. *is* for *was*.

899. Cx. *Upon the hous that was ful hye*.

906. F B *this* for *that*.

Somme good therin, or sumwhat here
 That leef me were, or that I wente.’

‘ Peter ! that is myn entente,’ 910

Quod he to me ; ‘ therfor I dwelle,
 But certeyn, oon thyng I thee telle,
 That, but I bringé thee therinne,
 Ne shalt thou never cunné gynne
 To come into hit, out of doute,
 So faste hit whirleth, lo, aboute.
 But sith that Jovés, of his grace,
 As I have seyde, wol thee solace
 Fynally with thise thynges,
 Unkouthé syghtés and tydynges, 920

To passé with thyn hevynesse,
 Swiche routhe hath he of thy distresse,—
 That thou suffrest debonairly,
 And wost thy-selven utterly,
 Desperat of all maner blis,
 Sith that Fortune hath maad a-mys
 The swote of al thyn hertés reste
 Languisshe and eek in poynt to breste,—
 That he through his myghty merite,
 Wol do thee an ese, al be hit lyte, 930
 And yaf expresse commaundement,
 To whiche I am obedient,
 To furthré thee with al my myght,
 And wysse and teché thee aright,
 Wher thou maist most tydyngés here ;
 Thou shalt anoon heer many oon lere.’

With this worde he right anoon
 Henté me up bytwene his toon,
 And at a wyndowe in me broghte,
 That in this hous was, as me thoghte,— 940
 And therwithal me thoghte hit stente,
 And no-thing hit abouté wente,—
 And me sette in the flore adoun.
 But which a congregacioun
 Of folk, as I saw rome aboute,

908. F B *thereon*.

910. Cx. Th. insert *now* after *that*.

914. Cx. Th. *conne* the *gyn*.

919. So all authorities. The line is at least one syllable short.

925. F B *Disesperat* of *alle blis*.

927. F *frot* ; B *foot* ; Cx. Th. *swote* ; Koch *fruit*.

930. Cx. *the an* ; F *than* ; Th. B *the*. Cx. omits *Wol* and inserts *wyl* after *he* in line above.

931. All insert *in* after *yaf*.

936. F B *Shaltow here anoon* ; Cx. Th. omit *anoon*, perhaps rightly ; Skeat *anoon heer*.

938. F B omit this line.

940. Cx. *Whyche on*.

944. Cx. *whyche a grete* ; Th. *suche a great*.

Some within and some withoute,
 Nas never seen, ne shal ben eft;
 That, certés, in the world nys left
 So many forméd by Nature,
 Ne deed so many a créature;
 That wel unethe in that place
 Hadde I oon foot brede of space;
 And every wyght that I saw there
 Rounéde everych in otherés ere
 A newé tydyng prevély,
 Or ellés tolde al openly
 Right thus, and seyde, 'Nost not thou
 That is betid, late or now?'

'Nó,' quod he, 'tél me what.'
 And than he tolde him this and that,
 And swoor therto that hit was sooth,—
 'Thus hath he sayd,' and 'Thus he dooth,'
 'Thus shal hit be,' 'Thus herde I seye,'
 'That shal be found,' 'That dare I leye.'
 That al the folk that is a-lyve
 Ne han the connyng to discrevye
 The thyngés that I herdé there,
 What aloudé, and what in ere.
 But al the wonder-most was this:
 Whan oon hadde herd a thyng y-wys,
 He com forth to another wight,
 And gan him tellén, anoon-right,
 The samé that to him was told,
 Or hit a forlong-way was old,
 But gan somewhat for to eche
 To this tidying in his speche
 More than ever hit spoken was.
 And nat so sone departéd nas
 Tho fro him, that he ne mette
 With the thridde; and, or he lette

946. F B omit this line, which is probably corrupt. Koch *Many a thousand in a route*.

956. Cx. Th. insert *it* before *tolde*.

958. Cx. Th. *to right now*.

959. All *quod he*; Willert *quod the other*.

963. All insert and before each *Thus*; Cx. Th. *And thus (this) shall be*.

971. F B *come forth ryght to*; Cx. *come forth unto*; Th. *Came stryght to*. Probably right in the original of F B had the word *forth* written above it because of its recurrence in the next line, and it then crept into the text as well as *right*. This theory is supported by the reading of Th., which is an edited text.

973. P B Th. *that him was*; Cx. *that was to him*.

976. F B Th. *this for his*.

977. F B *More than hit ever was*.

979. F B *That he fro . . . thoo*, etc.

Any stounde, he tolde him als;
 Were the tidying sooth or fals,
 Vit wolde he telle hit nathélees,
 And evermo with more encrees
 Than hit was erst. Thus north and southe
 Went every [thyng] fro mouth to mouthe,
 And that encreasyng evermo,
 As fire is wont to quykke and go
 From a sparké spronge amys,
 Til al a citee brent up is.

And whan that was ful up-spronge,
 And woxén more on every tonge
 Than ever hit was, [hit] went anoon
 Up to a wyndowe out to goon
 Or, but hit myghte out ther pace,
 Iit gan out crepe at som crevace,
 And fleigh forth fasté for the nones.

And somtyme saw I ther, at ones
 A lesyng and a sad soth-sawe,
 That gonne of aventure dawe
 Out to a wyndowe for to pace;
 And, when they mettén in that place,
 They were a-chekked bothé two,
 And neither of hem myghte out go;
 For other so they gonné croude,
 Til eche of hem gan crien loude,
 'Lat me go first!' 'Nay, but lat me!
 And here I wol ensuren thee
 Wyth the nones that thou wolt do so,
 That I shal never fro thee go,
 But be thyn owné sworén brother!
 We wil medle us eche with other,
 That no man, be they never so wrothe,
 Shal han that oon [of] two, but bothe
 At onés, al beside his leve,
 Come we a-morwé or on eve,
 Be we cried or stille y-rounded.'

Thus saw I false and sooth compounded.
 Togeder flec for oo tidynge.

Thus out at holcs gonné wrynge

986. F B *mouthe for thyng*; Cx. Th. *tydyng*; Skeat *word*.

991. F B *y-spronge*.

993. All read *and* for *second hit*.

999. Cx. *soth sayd sawe*, perhaps rightly.

1004. F B *most (must)*.

1005. Cx. omits l. 1005 to the end, but prints twelve spurious lines as conclusion.

1006. Th. *For eche other they gonne so*.

1009. Th. omits *the*.

1012. Th. *in for with*.

1014. F *han on two*; B omits *of two*; Th. *hane one two*.

Every tidyng streight to Fame ;
 And she gan yevén eche his name,
 After hir disposicioun,
 And yaf hem eek duracioun,
 Some to wexe and wané sone,
 As dooth the fairé whité mone,
 And leet hem gon. Ther myghte I seen
 Wengéd wondrés fasté fleen,
 Twenty thousand in a route,
 As Eolus hem blew aboute. 1030

And, lord ! this hous in allé tymes
 Was ful of shipmen and pilgrymes,
 With scrippés bret-ful of lesynges,
 Entrémedléd with tidynges,
 And eek aloné by himselve.
 O, many a thousand tymés twelve
 Saw I eek of these pardoneres,
 Currours, and eek messangeres,
 With boistés cramméd ful of lyes,
 As ever vessel was with lyes. 1040
 And as I alther-fastest wente
 Aboute, and dide al myn entente,
 Me for to pleye and for to lere,
 And eek a tydyng for to here,
 That I hadde herd of som contree
 That shal not now be told for me ;
 For hit no nede is, redély ;
 Folk can synge hit bet than I.
 For al mot out, other late or rathe,
 Allé the shevéns in the lathe. 1050

I herde a greté noise withalle
 In a corner of the halle,
 Ther men of lové tydynges tolde,

1036. Th. omits *a*.1039. Th. *bores*, B *bowes*.1049. Th. omits *other*.1050. Th. *rathe* for *lathe*.

And I gan thiderwarde beholde ;
 For I saw rennyng every wyght,
 As faste as that they haddén myght ;
 And everyche criede, 'What thing is that?'
 And som sayde, 'I not never what.'
 And whan they were alle on an hepe,
 Tho behyndé gonne up lepe, 1060
 And clamben up on other faste,
 And up the nose and yén caste,
 And troden faste on otherés heles,
 And stampe, as men doon after cles.

Atté laste I saw a man,
 Which that I ne wot, ne kan,
 But he semedé for to be
 A man of greet auctorité.

(*Unfinished*)

Cx. Th. add the following spurious lines

[And therwithal I abraide
 Out of my slepé, half afraide ; 1070
 Remembring wel what I hadde seen,
 And how hye and ferre I hadde been
 In my goost ; and hadde gret wonder
 Of that the god of thunder
 Hadde let me knowe ; and began to write
 Lyk as ye have herd me endite.
 Wherefor to studye and rede alway,
 I purpose to do day by day.
 Thus in dreaming and in game
 Endeth this lytel book of Fame.] 1080

1062. Th. *the noyse on hyghen*.1066. F B *nat ne kan* ; Th. *naught ne can* ;
 Skeat *nevene naught ne can*.

1069-71 Cx.

And wyth the noyse of them wo
 Sodeynly awoke anon tho,
 And remembryd, etc.

THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN

THE PROLOGUE

This prologue is extant in two different versions, an earlier and a later, between which there are many important variations (see Introduction). The portion in which most of these occur is here given in both forms, words and lines in the first version omitted or altered in the second being printed in italics.

THE PROLOGUE

FIRST VERSION

A THOUSENT *sythis have* I herd men telle,
That there is joye in hevenc and peyne in
helle,

And I acordē wel that it *be* so ;
But, nathēles, *this* wit I wel also,
That there ne is non *that dwellyth* in this
cuntre

That eythir hath in *helle or hevenc* i-be,
Ne may of it non othere weyis wytyn
But as he hath herd seyde, or founde it
wrytyn ;

For by asay there may no man it preve.

But *goddis* forbodē but men schuldē
leve 10

Wel morē thyng than men han seyn with
eye !

Men schal nat wenyn everything a lye,
For that he say it nat of yore ago.

God wot a thyng is nevere the lessē so,

Thow every wyght ne may it nat i-se.

Bernard the monk ne say nat al pardee !

Thanne motyn we to bokys that we fynde,
Thourw whiche that oldē thyngis ben in
mynde,

And to the doctryne of these oldē wyse,
Yevyn credence, in every skylful wyse ; 20

And trowyn on these olde aprovede storyis
Of holynesse, of regnys, of victoryis,
Of love, of hate, of othere sundery thyngis
Of which I may nat makē réhersynges.

1-49. Cp. B 1-49.

THE PROLOGUE

SECOND VERSION, B

A THOUSANDE tymēs I have herd men
telle,

That there is joy in hevenc and peyne in
helle,

And I acordē wel that it is so ;

But, nathēles, yet wot I wel also,

That ther is noon dwellyng in this countree,

That eythir hath in hevenc or in helle y-be,

Ne may of hit noon other weyēs witen,

But as he hath herd seyde, or founde it
writen ;

For by assay ther may no man it preve.

But God forbodē but men shuldē leve 10
Wel morē thing than men han seen with eye !

Men shal not wenen everything a lye

But-if hymselfe it seeth, or ellēs dooth ;

For, God wot, thing is never the lassē
sooth,

Thogh every wight ne may it not y-see.

Bernarde, the monke, ne saugh nat al,
parde !

Than motē we to bokēs that we fynde,—
Thurgh which that oldē thingēs ben in
mynde,—

And to the doctrine of these oldē wyse,
Yevē credence, in every skylful wise, 20

That tellen of these olde apprevēd stories,

Of holynesse, of regnēs, of victories,

Of love, of hate, of other sondry thynges,

Of whiche I may not maken rehersynges.

1. *men*, om. F³.

2. *That*, om. F².

16. *Bernard*, glossed in G F⁴. 'Bernardus monachus (om. G) non vidit omnia.'

FIRST VERSION

And if that oldē bokis weryn awaye,
 I-loryn were of rēembrance the keye.
 Wel oughte us thanne *on oldē bokys leve*,
 There *as there is* no othyr *asay* be preve;
 And as for me, thow that *myn wit* be lite,
 On bokys for to rede I me delyte, 30
 And in myn herte have hem in reverence,
 And to hem yeve *swich lust* and *swich*
 credence

That ther is *wel onethē* gamē non
 That from myne bokys make[th] me to gon
 But it be *other upon* the halyday,
Or ellis, in the joly tyme of May,
 Whan that I here the *smalē* foulis synge,
 And that the flouris gynnē for to sprynge,—
 Farwel myn *stodye*, *as lastynge that sesoun!*

Now have I *therto* this condycoun, 40
 Thát of alle the flouris in the mede
 Thanne love I most these flourys white
 and rede,
 Swyche as men callē dayesyis in oure
 toun.

To hem have I so gret affecioun,
 As I seyde erst, whan comyn is the may,
 That in myn bed there dawith me no day
 That I ne am up and walkynge in the mede,
 To sen these flouris agen the sunne to-
 sprede,

Whan it upryseth be *the morwe schene*, 49
The longē day thus walkynge in the grene.

And whan the sunne begynnys for to weste,
Thanne closeth it, and drawith it to reste,
So sore it is a-ferid of the nyght,
Til on the morwe that it is dayis lyght.
This dayeseye, of allē flouris flour,
Fulfyld of vertu and of alle honour,
And evere i-like fayr and frosh of hewe,
As wel in wyntyr as in somyr newe.
Fayn wolde I preysyn if I coude aright,
But, wo is me! it lyth nat in myn myght

51-59. Cp. B 60-67.

43. *our*, F *her*.

50-52, 57-60, 64-72. New lines.

SECOND VERSION, B

And if that oldē bokēs were awaye,
 Y-lornē were of remembraunce the key.
 Wel oughtus, thanne, honóuren and beleve
 These bokēs, ther we han noon other
 preve.

And as for me, though that I konne
 but lyte,

On bokēs for to rede I me delyte, 30
 And to hem yive I feyth and ful credence,
 And in myn herte have hem in reverence
 So hertely, that ther is gamē noon
 That from my bokēs maketh me to goon,
 But it be seldom on the holyday,
 Save, certeynly, whan that the month
 of May

Is comen, and that I here the foulēs synge,
 And that the flourēs gynnē for to
 sprynge,—

Farewel my boke, and my devocion!

Now have I thanne suche a condicion,
 Thát of alle the flourēs in the mede, 47
 Than love I most thise flourēs white and
 rede,

Suche as men callen daysyes in our toun.
 To hem have I so grete affecioun,
 As I seyde erst, whan comen is the May,
 That in my bed ther daweth me no day,
 That I nam up and walkyng in the mede,
 To seen this floure agein the sonnē sprede,
 Whan it uprysith erly by the morwe;
 That blisful sightē softneth al my sorwe, 50
 So glad am I, whan that I have presence
 Of it, to doon it allē reverence,
 As she that is of allē flourēs flour,
 Fulfillēd of al vertue and honour,
 And evere ilikē faire, and fresshe of hewe.
 And I love it, and evere ylikē newe,
 And ever shal, til that myn hertē dye;
 Al swere I nat, of this I wol nat lye; 52
 Ther lovēd no wight hotter in his lyve. 53

And, whan that it is eve, I rennē blyv,
 As sone as evere the sonnē gynneth weste,
 To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,
 For fere of nyght, so hateth she derknesse!
 Hir chere is pleyntysprad in the brightnesse
 Of the sonnē, for ther it wol uncloze.

Allas, that I ne had Englyssh, ryme or
 . prose,

Súffisant this flour to preyse aright!

FIRST VERSION

For wel I wot that *folk* han herebeforn 61
Of makynge ropyn and lad away the corn,
[And] I come aftyr, glenynge here and
ther,

And am ful glad if I may fynde an er
Of any goodly word that *they* han laft.
And if it happè me rehercen eft
That *they* han in here froschè songis said,
I hope that they wele nat benevele a-payed,
Sithe it is seyd in fortheryng and honour
Of hem that cythir servyn lef or flour; 70
For trustyth wel I ne have nat undyrtake
As of the lef agayn the flour to make,
Ne of the flour to make ageyn the lef,
No more than of the corn agen the shef;
For as to me is lefere non, ne lothere,
I am withholdè yit with never nothire;
I not who servyth lef ne who the flour.
That nys nothyng the entent of myn
labour;

For this *werk* is al of anothyr tunne 79
Of oldè story, er swich *strif* was begunne.
But wherfore that I spak to yeve credence
To *bokys* olde and don hem reverence
Is for men schulde autoriteis beleve,
There as there lyth non othyr asay be preve.
For myn entent is, or I fro you fare,
The nakede tixt in Englis to declare
Of manye a story, or ellis of manye a geste,
As autours seyn—levyth hem if you leste.

61-70. Cp. B 73-82.

71-80. Cp. B 188-196.

81-84. Cp. B 97-100.

72. *With the Leef or with the Flour.* This appears to be the earliest allusion to the dispute as to the merits of the Flower and the Leaf on which a follower of Chaucer afterwards wrote the Poem with that title.

83-96. New lines.

96. in (2), B² only; rest om.100. *they*, Trin.²; Arch. Seld. *man*; F om.; rest *men*.

101-120. New lines.

102. *at*, om. F.

SECOND VERSION, B

But helpeth ye that han konnyng and myght,

Ye lovers, that kan make of sentement;
In this case oghte ye be diligent 70
To forthren me somwhat in my labour,
Whethir ye ben with the Leef or with
the Flour;

For wel I wot, that ye han her-biforne
Of makynge ropen, and lad away the corne;
And I come after, glenyng here and there,
And am ful glad if I may fynde an ere
Of any goodly word that ye han left.
And thogh it happen me rehercen eft
That ye han in your fresshe songes sayede,
Forbereth me, and beth not evele apayede,
Syn that ye see I do it in the honour 81
Of love, and eke in service of the flour
Whom that I serve as I have witte or myght.
She is the clerenesse and the verray lyght,
That in this derkè worlde me wynt and
ledyth,

The herte in-with my sorwful brest yow
dredith,

And loveth so sore, that ye ben verrayly
The maistresse of my witte, and nothing I.
My worde, my werk, is knyht so in youre
bond

That as an harpe obeith to the hond, 90
That maketh it soun after his syngerynge,
Ryght so mowe ye oute of myn hertè bringe
Swich vois, ryght as yow lyst, to laughe
or pleyne;

Be ye my gide, and lady sovereyne.

As to my erthely god, to yowe I calle,
Bothe in this werke, and in my sorwès alle.

But wherfore that I spake to yive
credence

To oldè stories, and doon hem reverence,
And that men mosten morè thyng beleve
Then they may seen at eye or ellès preve,
That shal I seyn, whanne that I see my
tyme— 101

I may nat al attonès speke in ryme.

My besy gost, that thursteth alwey newe,
To seen this flour so yong, so fresshe of
hewe,

Constreyned me with so gledy desire,
That in myn herte I feelè yet the fire,
That madè me to ryse er it wer day,

FIRST VERSION

Whan passed was almost the monyeth of May
And I hadde romed, al the somerys day, 90
The grenè medewe, of which that I yow tolde,
Upon the froschè dayeseie to beholde,
And that the sonne out of the south gan weste
And closede was the flour and gon to reste
For derknesse of the nyht of which sche dradde,
Hom to myn hous, fulswifly, I me spadde,
And in a lytyl erber that I have,
I-benchede newe with turvis, frosche i-grave,
I bad men schuldè me myn couchè make ;
For deyntè of the newè somerys sake, 100
I bad hem strowè flouris on my bed.
Whan I was layd and hadde myn eyen hid
I fel aslepe withinne an hour or two.
Me mette how I was in the medewe tho,
And that I romede in that samè gyse,
To sen that flour, as ye han herl devyse.
Fayr was this medewe, as thoughte me,
overal ;
With flouris sote enbroudit was it al,
As for to speke of gomme, or erbe, or tre,
Comparisoun may non i-makede be ; 110
For it surmountede pleynly alle odours.
And of richè beutè allè flourys.
Forgetyn hadde the erthe his pore estat
Of wyntyrt, that hym nakede made and mat,
And with his swerd of cold so sore hadde grevyd :
Now hadde the tempresonneal that relevyd,
And clothede hym in grenè al newe ageyn.
The smalè foulis, of the seson fayn,
That from the panter and the net ben skapid, 119
Upon the foulere, that hem made a-wapid

SECOND VERSION, B

And this was now the firstè morwe of May,
 With dredful hert, and glad devocion
 For to ben at the resurreccion 110
 Óf this flour, whan that it shulde uncloze
 Agayne the sonne, that roos as redeas rose,
 That in the brest was of the beste, that day,
 That Agenorès doghtre ladde away.
 And doun on knes anon-ryght I me sette,
 And as I koude, this fressshè flour I grette,
 Knelyng alwey, til it unclosèd was,
 Upon the smalè, softè, swotè gras,
 That was with flourès swote enbrouded al,
 Of swich swetnesse, and swich odour
 over-al, 120
 That for to speke of gomme, or herbe, or
 tree,
 Comparisoun may noon y-makèd be ;
 For it surmounteth pleynly alle odoures,
 And of richè beutè allè flourès.
 Forgeten had the erthe his pore estate
 Of wyntir, that him naked made and mate,
 And with his swerd of colde so sorè greved ;
 Nowhath the atemprèsonneal that releved
 That naked was, and clad it new agayne.
 The smalè foulès, of the sesoun fayne, 130
 That of the panter and the nette ben scaped,
 Upon the foweler, that hem made a-whaped
 In wynter, and distroyèd hadde hire
 broode,
 In his dispite hem thoghte it did hem goode
 To synge of hym, and in hir songe dispise
 The foulè cherle, that, for his coveytise,
 Had hem betrayèd with his sophistrye.
 This was hir songe, 'The foweler we
 deffye,
 And al his crafte.' And sommè songen clere
 Layès of love, that joye it was to here, 140
 In worshippyng and in preysing of hir
 make ;
 And, for the newè blisful somers sake,
 Upon the braunchès ful of blomès softè,
 In hire delyt, they turnèd hem ful ofte,
 And songen, 'Blessèd be Seynt Valentyne !
 For on his day I chees you to be myne,
 Withouten repentyng myne hertè swete !'
 And therewithal hire bekès gonnen meete,
 Yeldyng honùr and humble obeysaunces
 To love, and diden hire othere observaunces
 That longeth onto love, and to nature ; 151

89-107. Cp. B 100, 180-182, 197-212.
 108-137. Cp. B 119-151.

108. *this*, om. F.

111. *that*, om. F.

113. *the beste*, Taurus or the Bull.

114. *Agenores doghtre*, Europa.

124. *alle*, F. of.

143-144. New lines.

FIRST VERSION

In wyntyre, and distroyed hadde hire brood,
In his dispit hem thoughte it dede hem
good

To synge of hym, and in here song despise
The foulè chert that, for his coveytyse,
Hadde hem betrayed with his sophistrye.
This was here song 'The foulere we defye.'
Some songyn *on the* [] *braunchis* clere
[Layes] of love, that joye it was to here,
In *worschepe* and in preysyng of hire make,
And [for] the newè blisful somerys sake.
[And] sungyn 'Blyssede be scynt Valentyn,
[For] at his day I ches yow to be myn, 132
Withoutè répentynge, myn hertè swete !'
And therewithal here bekys gunné mete,
[Yeldyng] honour and humble obey-
saunces,

*And after dedyn othere observauncys,
Ryht [longynge] onto love and to natures :
So eche of hem to cryaturys.*

*This song to herken I dede al myn entent,
Forwhy I mette I wiste what they ment.
Tyl at the laste a larkè song above, 141
'I se,' quod she, 'the myghty god of love.
Lo, yond he comyth. Ischisewyngis sprede.'
Tho gan I loken endeloug the mede
And saw hym come and in his hond a quene
Clothed in ryal abyte, al of grene.*

Lines 127-138 are very imperfect in the unique MS., which omits several words and reads *and that for that* in l. 128, *of for for* in l. 130, *That for And* in l. 131, *The honour and the humble* in l. 135. L. 138 seems hopeless.

144-166. Cp. B 211-234.

152-187. New lines.

164. *it*, Arch. Seld. *that*; F⁵ *it nat*.

SECOND VERSION, B

Construeth that as yow lyst, I do no cure.
And tho that haddè don unkyndè-
nesse,—

As doth the tydif, for newfangelnesse,—
Besoghtè mercy of hir trespassynge,
And humblèly songen hir répentynge,
And sworn on the blomès to be trewe,
So that hire makès wolde upon hem rewe,
And at the lastè maden hir acorde. 159
Al founde they Daunger for a tyme a lord,
Yet Pitee, thurgh his strongè gentyl myght,
Foryaf, and madè Mercy passen Ryght,
Thurgh Innocence, and rulèd Curtesye.
But I ne clepe it innocence folye,
Ne fals pitee, for vertue is the mene;
As Ethike seith, in swich maner I mene.
And thus thise fowelès, voide of al malice,
Acordèden to love, and lasten vice
Of hate, and songen alle of oon acorde,
'Welcome, Somer, oure governour and
lordè.' 170.

And Zepherus and Flora gentilly
Yaf to the flourès, softe and tenderly,
Hir swootè breth, and made hem for to
sprede,

As god and goddesse of the floury mede.
In whiche me thought I myghtè, day by day,
Dwellen alwey, the joly month of May,
Withouten slepe, withouten mete or
drynke.

Adoun ful softely I gan to synke,
And lenynge on myn elbowe and my syde,
The longè day I shoop me for to abide, 180
For nothing ellis, and I shal nat lye,
But for to loke upon the dayèsie,
That men by resoun wel it callè may
The dayèsie, or elles the ye of day,
The emperice, and flourè of flourès alle.
I pray to God that fairè mote she falle,
And alle that loven flourès, for hire sake
But, nathèles, ne wene nat that I make
In preysyng of the Flour agayn the Leef,
No more than of the corne agayn the sheef;
For as to me nys lever noon, ne lother, 191
I nam withholden yit with never nother.
Ne I not who serveth Leef, ne who the
Flour.

Wel browken they hir service or labour !
For this thing is al of another tonne,

FIRST VERSION

A frette of goold sche haddē next hyre heer
 And upon that a whit corone sche beer,
 With *manye flourys*, and I schal nat lye;
 For al the world ryght as the dayseye 150
 I-corounede is with whitē levys lite,
Swiche were the *flourys* of hire corone
 white.

For of o perle fyn *and* oriental
 Hyre whitē coroun was i-makyd al.
 For which the whitē coroun above the grene
 Māde hire lyk a dayseye for to sene,
 Considerede ek *the* fret of gold above.
 I-clothēd was this myhty god of love
 Of silk, i-broudede ful of grenē grevys.
A garlond on his hed of rosē levys, 160
Slekid al with lylie flourys newe;
But of his face I can not seyn the hewe,
For sekryly his facē schon so bryhte
 That *with the glem* astonedē was the syhte,

149. *manye*, text *mane*, with the *n* added as a correction.

201. A new line.

211-212. F has these lines in reverse order, perhaps rightly.

217. *And*, Arch. Seld. *and if*.

229-231. New lines.

SECOND VERSION, B

Of oldē storye, er swiche thinge was
 begonne. ¶

Whan that the sonne out of the south gan
 weste,
 And that this flour gan close, and goon to
 reste,
 For derknesse of the nyght, the which she
 dredde,
 Home to myn house full swiftly I mespedde
 To goon to reste, and erly for to ryse, 201
 To seen this flour to-sprede, as I devyse.
 And in a litel herber that I have,
 That benchēd was on turvēs fressh y-grave,
 I bad men sholdē me my couchē make;
 For deyntee of the newē someres sake,
 I bad hem strawen flourē on my bed.

Whan I was leydē, and hadde myn eyen
 hed,

I fel on slepe, in-with an houre or two.
 Me mettē how I lay in the medewe tho, 210
 To seen this flour that I love so and drede;
 And from a-fer come walkyng in the mede
 The god of Love, and in his hand a quene,
 And she was clad in real habite grene;
 A fret of gold she haddē next her heer,
 And upon that a whitē crowne she beer,
 With flourouns smālē, and I shal nat lye,
 For al the worlde ryght as a dayseye
 Y-corouned is with whitē levēs lyte,
 So were the flourouns of hire coroune
 white; 220

For of o perlē, fyne, óriental,
 Hire whitē coroune was i-makēd al,
 For which the whitē coroune above the
 grene

Māde hire lyke a daysie for to sene,
 Considered eke hir fret of golde above.
 Y-clothēd was this mighty god of Lov
 In silke enbrouded, ful of grenē greves,
 In-with a fret of redē rosē leves,
 The fresshest syn the worlde was first by-
 gone.

His gilt here was corownd with a sonne 230
 In stede of golde, for hevynesse and wyghte;
 Therwith me thocht his facē shon so
 bryhte

That wel unnethēs myght I him beholde;
 And in his hande me thocht I saugh him
 holde

FIRST VERSION

A furlongwey I myhte hym not beholde.
But at the laste in hande I saw hym holde
 Two fyr dartis, as the glee dys rede.

And aungellych hyse wengis *gan he sprede.*
 And al-be that men seyn that blynd is he,
 Algate me thoughte he myghte *wel i-see,*
 For sternely on me he gan beholde, ¹⁷¹
 So that his lokyng doth myn herte colde.
 And be the hond he held *the noble quene,*
 Coroued with whit and clothede al in

grene,

So womanly, so benygne and so meke
 That in this world, thow that men woldē
 seke,

Hālf hire beutē schulde men not fynde
 In cryature that formede is be Kynde.
 Hiire namē was Alceste the *debonayre.*

I preyed to God that evere falle *sche fayre,* ¹⁸⁰
 For ne haddē confort been of hire presence
 I hadde be ded withoutyn ony defence,
 For dred of Lovys wordys and his chere,
 As, whan tyme is, hereafter ye schal here.
 Byhynde this god of love, upon *this grene,*
 I saw comyng of ladyis nynetene,
 In ryal abyte, a ful esy pas,
 And after hem come of wemen swich a tras,
 That syn that God Adam [hadde] made
 of erthe

The threddē part of *women,* ne the ferthe,
 Ne wende I not by possibilite ¹⁹¹
 I haddyn evere in this [wyldē] world i-be.
 And trewe of love these wemen were echon.
 Now whether was that a wondyr thyng,
 or non,

That ryht anon as that they gunne espye
 This flour whiche that I clepe the dayseye,
 Ful sodeynly they styntyn alle atonys
 And knede adoun, as it were for the nonys.
And after that they wentyn in cumpas,
Daunsynge about this flour an esy pas, ²⁰⁰
And songyn, as it were in carol-wyse,
This balade, whiche that I schal yow devyse.

Hyd, Absalon, thyne giltē tressēs clere,
 Ester, ley thow thy meknesse al adoun,

167-178. Cp. B 235-246.
 167. For *two fyr* the MS. reads *tho fery*, and
 in l. 172 *both for doth*.
 179-198. Cp. B 276-295.
 203-224. Cp. B 259-270.

SECOND VERSION, B

Two fyr darts, as the gledēs rede,
 And aungelyke his wyngēs saugh I sprede.
 And, al be that men seyn that blynd is he,
 Algate me thoughtē that he myghtē se;
 For sternely on me he gan byholde, ²³⁹
 So that his loking doth myn herte colde.
 And by the hande he held *this noble quene,*
 Crowned with white, and clothed al in
 grene,

So womanly, so benygne, and^d so meke,
 That in this world, thogh that men woldē
 seke,

Hālf hire beutē shulde men nat fynde
 In creature that formed is by Kynde.
 And therefore may I seyn, as thyneketh me,
 This songe in preysyng of this lady fre.

Hyde, Absalon, thy giltē tresses clere;
 Ester, ley thou thy meknesse al adoun; ²⁵⁰
 Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere;
 Penelope, and Marcia Catoun,
 Make of youre wifhode no comparysoun;
 Hyde ye youre beautēs, Ysoudē and
 Eleyne;

My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

Thy fairē body lat it nat appere,
 Lavyne; and thou Lucesse of Romē toun,
 And Polixene, that boghten love so dere,
 And Cleopatre, with al thy passyoun,
 Hyde ye your trouthe of love, and your
 renoun, ²⁶⁰
 And thou, Tesbe, that hast of love suche
 peyne;

My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

Hero. Dido, Laudomia, alle yfere,
 And Phillis, hangyng for thy Demophon,
 And Canace, espiēd by thy chere,
 Ysiphile, betraysed with Jason,

245. *Half*, Arch. Seld. *Half of*.
 247-248. New lines.
 252. *Marcia Catoun*, Cato's daughter Marcia,
 who would not marry a second time.
 257. *Lavyne*, Lavinia, wife of Aeneas.
 258. *Polixene*, Polyxena, daughter of Priam,
 betrothed to Achilles.
 263. *Laudomia*, Laodamia.
 264. *Phillis*, see ll. 2394-2560.
 265. *Canace*, cp. *Cant. Tales*, B 78.
 266. *Ysiphile*, Hypsipyle, see ll. 1368-1577.

FIRST VERSION

Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendely manere ;
 Penelope and Marcia Catoun,
 Mak of youre wyfhod no comparisoun ;
 Hyde ye youre beuteis, Ysoude and Elene :
Alceste is here that al that may destene.

Thyn fayrè body lat it nat apeere, ²¹⁰
 Laveyne, and thow, Lucesse of Romè
 town,
 And Pollexene, that boughtè love so dere,
 Ek Cleopatre with al thyn passioune,
 Hide ye youre trouthe *in* love and youre
 renoun ;
 And thow Tysbe, that hast *for* love swich
 peyne ;
Alceste is here that al that may desteyne.

Herro, Dido, Laodomya, alle in fere,
 Ek Phillis hangynge for thyn Demophoun,
 And Canace espied be thyn chere,
 Ysiphile bytrayed with Jasoun, ²²⁰
 Mak of youre trouthe *in* love no bost, ne
 soun ;
 Nor Ypermystre, or Adriane, *ne pleyne* ;
Alceste is here that al that may disteyne.

Whan that this balade al i-songyn was,
Upon the softe and sotè grenè gras
 They settyen hem ful softly adoun,
By ordere alle in cumpas, alle inveroun.
 Fyrst sat the god of love and *thanne* this
 queene

With the whitè corone clad in grene,
 And sithyn al the remenant hy and by, ²³⁰
 As they were of *degre*, ful curteysly ;
 Ne nat a word was spokyn in that place
 The mountenaunce of a furlongwey of
 space.

I lenynge fastè by, undyr a hente,
 Abod to knowè what this peple mente,
 As stille as ony ston, til at the laste
 The god of love on me his eyè caste
 And seyde 'Who *restith* there?' and I
 answerde

Unto his axsyng, whan that *I hym* herde,
 And seyde 'Sere, it am I,' and cam hym
 nere ²⁴⁰

226-257. Cp. B 301-331.

SECOND VERSION, B

Maketh of your trouthe neythir boost ne
 soun,
 Nor Ypermystre, or Adriane, ye tweyne ;
 My lady cometh, that al thys may dysteyne.

This balade may ful wel y-songen be,
 As I have seyde erst, by my lady free ; ²⁷¹
 For certeynly al thise mowe nat suffice
 To apperen wyth my lady in no wyse.
 For as the sonné wole the fire disteyne,
 So passeth al my lady sovereyne,
 That is so good, so faire, so debonayre,
 I prey to God that ever falle hire faire.
 For naddè comfort ben of hire presence,
 I hadde ben dede, withouten any defence.
 For drede of Lovès wordès, and his chere,
 As, when tyme is, hereafter ye shal here.

Behynde this god of Love upon the
 grene ²⁸²

I saugh comyng of ladyès nynctene
 In real habite, a ful esy paas ;
 And after hem come of wymen swich a
 traas,
 That syn that God Adam hadde made of
 erthe,

The thriddè part of mankynde, or the ferthe,
 Ne wende I nat by possibilitee,
 Had ever in this widè worlde y-bee ;
 And trewe of love thise women were echon.

Now wheither was that a wonder thing
 or non, ²⁹¹

That ryght anon, as that they gonne espye
 Thys flour, which that I clepe the daycès,
 Ful sodeynly they stynten al attones,
 And knelède doune, as it were for the nones,
 And songen with o vois, 'Heel and honour
 To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour
 That bereth our alder pris in figuryng !
 Hire whitè corowne beryth the witness-
 yng ?'

And with that word, a-compas environ,
 They setten hem ful softly adoun, ³⁰¹
 First sat the god of Love, and syth his
 queene

^{268.} *Ypermystre*, Hypermnestra, see ll. 2562-2723.

^{268.} *Adriane*, Ariadne, see ll. 1886-2225.

^{271.} *by*, concerning.

^{271-275.} New lines.

^{296-297.} New lines.

FIRST VERSION

And salewede hym. Quod he, 'What
dost thou her

In myn presence, and that so holdely?
For it were better worthi, trewely,
A worm to com in[to] myn syht than thou.'
'And why, sere?' quod I, 'and it lykē yow?'
'For thou,' quod he, 'art therto nothyng
able,

*Myne servauntis been alle wyse and hon-
ourable.*

Thow art myn mortal fo and me warreyest,
And of myne oldē servauntis thou
mysseyest,

And hynderyst hem with thy translacyoun,
And lettist folk to han devocoun 251
To servyn me, and haldist it folye
To troste on me: thou mayst it nat denye.
For in pleynt tixt, it nedyth nat to glose,
Thow hast translaid the Romauns of the
Rose

That is an cresye ageyns myn lawe,
And makyst wisē folk fro me withdrawe.
And thynkist in thyn wit, that is ful colic,
That he nys but a verray propre fole 259
That levyth paramours to harde and hote.
Wel wot I therby thou begynnyst dote,
As oldē folis, whan here spīryt saylyth
Thanne blame they folk and wete nat what
hem ealyth.

Hast thou nat mad in Englys ek the bok
How that Crisseydē Troylis forsok.
In schewyng how that wemen han don mis.
But nathēles answer me now to this,
Why noldist thou as wel a seyd goodnes
Of wemen, as thou hast seyd wokedenes?
Was there no goodē matyr in thyn mynde,
Ne in alle thy bokys ne coudist thou nat
fynde 271

Sum story of wemen that were goode and
trewe;

Yis, God wol, sixty bokys, olde and newe,
Hast thou thyself, alle ful of story's grete,
That bothe Romayns and ek Grekis trete
Of sundery wemen, whiche lyf that they
ladde,

And evere an hunderede goode ageyn on
badde,—

This knowith God, and allē clerkis eke,

265-266. Cp. B 332-333.

SECOND VERSION, B

With the whitē corowne, clad in grene;
And sithen al the remenaunt by and by,
As they were of estaat, ful curteysly,
Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place,
The mountaunce of a furlong wey of
space.

I, knelyng by this floure, in good entente
Abode, to knowen what this peple mente,
As stille as any ston; til at the laste 310
This god of Love on me his eighen caste,
And seyde, 'Who kneleth there?' And
I answerde

Unto his askyng, whan that I it herde,
And seyde, 'I am I,' and come him nere,
And salwed him. Quod he, 'What
dostow here,

So nygh myn ownē floure, so holdely?
It werē better worthy trewely
A worme to neghen ner my flour than
thow.'

'And why, sire,' quod I, 'and it lykē yow?'
'For thou,' quod he, 'art therto nothing
able.' 320

It is my relyke, digne and delytable,
And thou my foo, and al my folke werreyest,
And of my noldē servauntis thou mysseyest,
And hynderest hem, with thy translacioun,
And lettist folke from hire devocioun
To servē me, and holdest it folye
To servē Love. Thou maist it nat denye,
For in pleyne text, withouten nede of glose,
Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the
Rose,

That is an heresye ayeins my lawe, 330
And makest wisē folke fro me withdrawe;
And of Cresyde thou hast seyde as the lystē,
That maketh men to wommen lassē triste,
That ben as trewe as ever was any steel?
Of thyn answer avisē the ryght weel,
For thogh that thou reneyed hast my lay,
As other wrecches han doon many a day,
By Seyntē Venus, that my moder ys,
If that thou lyve, thou shalt repenten this
So cruelly, that it shal wele be sene.' 340

321. A new line.

330. This line clearly points to Chaucer having
translated from the continuation of the *Roman
de la Rose* by Jean de Meung as well as from the
unfinished original by Guillaume Lorris.

335, 348-493. New lines.

FIRST VERSION

*That usyn sweche materis for to seke.
 What seyth Valerye, Titus, or Claudyan,
 What seyth Jerome agayns Iovynyan, 281
 How clenè maydenys and how trewè wyvys,
 How stedefaste wedewys duryng alle here
 lyvys,*

*Telleth Jerome, and that nat of a fewe
 But, I dar seyn, an hunderede on a reive,
 That it is pitè for to rede, and routhe,
 The wo that they endurè for here trouthe.
 For to hyre lovè werè they so trewe,
 That rather than they wolè take a newe,
 They chosè to be del in sundery wyse, 290
 And deirdyn, as the story vele devyse.
 And some were brend and some were cut
 the hals,*

*And some dreynt, for they woldyn not be
 fuls ;*

*For allè kepèd they here maydynhed,
 Or ellis wedlok, or here wedewehed.
 And this thyng was nat kept for holynesse,
 But al for verray vertu and clennessè,
 And for men schuldè set on hem no lak ;
 And yit they werè hethene, al the pak,
 That were so sore a-drad of allè schame. 300
 These oldè wemen keptè so here name,
 That in this world I trowe men shal nat
 fynde*

*A man that coudè be so trewe and kynde
 As was the lestè woman in that tyde !
 What seyth also the epistelle of Oryde
 Of trewè wyvys and of here labour ?
 What Vincent in his Estorial Myroure ?
 Ek al the world of autourys maystow here,
 Cristene and hethene, trete of swich matere,
 It nedyth nat al day thus for to enlute. 310
 But yit I seye what rylyth the to wryte
 The draf of storyis and forgete the corn ?
 Be Seynt Venus, of whom that I was born,
 Althow [that] thow reney[ed] hast myn
 lay,*

*As othere oldè folys manye a day,
 Thow shalt repente it, that it schal be sene.
 Thanne spak Alceste the worthyere quene,
 And seydè, 'God, ryght of youre curtesye*

307. Vincent de Beauvais, in his *Miroir Historial*.

313-323. Cp. B. 338-347.

316. *that*, MS. *so that*.

SECOND VERSION, B

*Tho spake this lady, clothèd al in
 greene, 341
 And seydè, 'God, ryght of youre curtesye,
 Ye moten herken if he can replye
 Agayns al this that ye have to him meved ;
 A god ne sholdè nat be thus agreved,*

FIRST VERSION

Ye motyn herken, if he can replye
Ageyns these *poynytys* that ye han to hym
mevid. 320

A god ne schuldè not thus been agrevyd,
But of his deitee he schal be stable,
And therto ryghtful and ek mercyable.
He schal nat ryghfully his yre wreke
Or he have herd the tothyr partye speke.
Al ne is nat gospel that is to you pleynyde ;
The god of love hereth many a tale i-jeynyde.
For in youre court is many a losengeour,
And manye a queynte totulour acusour,
That tabouryn in youre eres manye a thyng,
For hate or for jelous ymagynyng, 331
And for to han with you sum dalyaunce.
Envye—I preye to God yere hire mys-
chaunce—

Is lavender in the *gretè* court alway ;
For sche ne partyth, neythir nyght ne day,
Out of the hous of Cesar—thus seyth
Dante—

Whoso that goth, alwey sche *motè* wante.
This man to you may *wrongly* ben acused,
There as be ryght hym oughtè ben excusid.
Or ellis, sere, for that this man is nyce, 340
He may translate a thyng in no malyce
But for he usyth *bokis* for to make,
And *takyth non hede* of what matere he
take,

Therfore he wrot the Rose and ek Crisseyde
Of innocence, and nyste what he seyde.
Or hym was bodyn makè thilkè tweye
Of sum persone, and durste it not withseye ;
For he hath wretè manye a bok er this.
He ne hath not don so greuously amys
To translate that oldè clerkès wryte, 350
As thow that he of malyce wolde endyte
Despit of love, and hadde hymself
i-wrought.

This schulde a ryghtwys lord han in his
thought

And not ben lyk tyrauntis of Lumbardye
That usyn *wilfulhed* and tyrannye.
For he that kyng or lord is naturel
Hym oughtè nat be tyraunt and crewel,
As is a fermour, to don the harm he can.

322. *deitee*, MS. *dede*.

328-343. Cp. B 352-361, 350-351, 362-365.

346 sqq. Cp. B 366 sqq.

SECOND VERSION, B

But of hys *deitee* he shal be stable,
And therto gracious and merciable.
And if ye nere a god that knowen alle,
Thanne myght it be as I yow tellen shalle ;
This man to yow may falsly ben accused,
That as by right him oughtè ben excused ;
For in youre courte ys many a losengeour,
And many a queinte totelere acusour,
That tabouren in youre erès many a soun,
Ryght afir hire ymagynacioun,
To have youre daliance, and for envie.
Thise ben the causes, and I shal nat lye,
Envie is lavendere of the court alway ;
For she ne parteth, neither nyght ne day,
Out of the house of Cesar,—thus seith

Dante ; 360
Whoso that goth, algate she wol nat
wante.

And eke, parauntere, for this man is nyce,
He myghtè doon it, gessyng no malice ;
But for he useth thyngès for to make,
Hym rekketh noght of what matere he
take ;

Or him was boden maken thilkè tweye
Of somme persone, and durste it nat
withseye

Or him repenteth outrèly of this.
He ne hath nat doon so greuously amys,
To translaten that oldè clerkès writen,
As thogh that he of malice wolde enditen,
Despite of Love, and had himselfe it
wrought. 372

This sholde a ryghtwis lord have in his
thought,

And nat be lyke tirauntes of Lumbardye,
That han no réward but at tyrannye.
For he that kyng or lorde is naturel,
Hym oghtè nat be tiraunt ne crewel,
As is a fermour, to doon the harme he kan ;

351. *That*, so that ; a better reading than the
Ther of the earlier version.

354. *soun*, F *swoun*, wrongly.

357. A new line.

359. In the *Inferno*, xvii. 64-65, Invidia is called
La meretrice, che mai dall' ospizio Di
Cesaro non torse gli occhi putti.

361. *wante*, he missing.

364. *But*, F B om.

368. A new line.

371. *As*, F³ and Pepys *And*, wrongly.

374. *tirauntes of Lumbardye*, like the Visconti.

FIRST VERSION

He muste thynke it is his ligé man.
And that hym owith o verry duettee, 360
Schewyn his peple pley n benygnete
And wel to heryn here excusacyouns,
And here compleyntys and petyciouns,
In duewe tymè, whan they schal it profre.
 This is the sentens of the philosopre :
 A kyng to kepe hise lygis in justice,
 Withouten doutè that is his ofise,
And therto is a kyng ful depe i-sworn
ful manye an hunderede wyntyr here-
be-forn,
And for to kepe his lordys hir degre, 370
 As it is ryght and skylful that they be
 Enhaunsede and honourèd [and] most dere
 For they ben half goddys in this worldè
 here.
This schal be don bothè to pore [and]
ryche, etc.

[For the rest of the Prologue and the
 Legends the differences between this
 MS. and the rest are slight enough
 to be indicated in the notes.]

367. *Withouten*, MS. *which oughtyn*.

at ?

SECOND VERSION, B

He mostè thinke it is his leegè man, 379
 And is his tresour, and his gold in cofre.
 This is the sentence of the philosopre :
 A kyng to kepe his leegès in justice,
 Withouten doutè that is his office.
 Al wol he kepe his lordès hire degre,
 As it is ryght and skilful that they bee
 Enhauncèd and honourèd, and moste
 dere,
 For they ben half goddys in this worldè
 here. — *Refers to Lordes*
 Wit mote he doon bothe ryght, to poore and
 ryche,
 Al be that hire estaat be nat yliche,
 And han of poore folke compassoun ; 390
 For lo, the gentil kynde of the lyoun !
 For whan a flye offendith him or biteth,
 He with his tayle away the flye smyteth
 Al esely ; for of his gentrye
 Hym deyneth nat to wreke hym on a flye,
 As doth a curre, or elles another best.
 In noble corage oughtè ben arest,
 And weyen every thing by equitye,
 And ever have réwarde to his owen
 degre.
 For, syr, it is no maistrye for a lorde 400
 To dampne a man, without answeere of
 worde,
 And for a lorde, that is ful foule to use.
 And if so be he may hym nat excuse,
 But asketh mercy with a dredeful herte,
 And prosereth him, ryght in his barè
 sherte,
 To ben ryght at your owen jugèment,
 Than oght a god, by short avysèment,
 Consydre his owne honour, and hys trespass ;
 For syth no cause of dethe lyeth in this
 caas,
 Yow oght to ben thelyghter merciable. 410
 Leteth youre ire, and beth sumwhat
 trefable !
 The man hath servèd yow of his kunnyng,
 And furthred wel youre lawe in his making.

380. A new line.
 384. *kepe*, i.e. keep for ; Trin. MS. reads : *As well hys lordes to kepe theyr degre*.
 400. *no maistrye*, no difficult matter.
 403. *if*, F4 and Pepys ii.
 404. *dredeful*, Gg (390) *sorrowful*.
 405. It was thus that, as late as 1429, Alexander, Lord of the Isles, presented himself to James I.

'Al be hit that he kan nat wel endite,
Yet hath he madè lewdè folke delyte
To servè you, in preysinge of your name.
He made the book that hight the Hous

of Fame,
And eke the Deeth of Blaunchè the
Duchesse,

And the Parlèment of Foulès, as Igesse, 419
And al the Love of Palamoun and Arcite
Of Thebès, thogh the storye ys knowen
lyte ;

And many an ymptè for your halydayes,
That highten balades, roundels, vielayes.

'And for to speke of other holynesse,
He hath in prosè translated Boece,
And made the Lyfe also of Seynt Cecile.
He made also, gon ys a gretè while,
Origenes upon the Maudeleyne.

Hym oughtè now to have the lessè peyne,
He hath made many a lay, and many a
thyngc. 430

'Now as ye be a god, and eke a kyngc,
I youre Alcestè, whilom quene of Trace,
I askè yow this man, ryght of youre grace,
That ye him never hurte in al his lyve,
And he shal sweren to yow, and that as
blyve,

He shal no more agilen in this wyse,
But he shal maken, as ye wol devyse,
Of women trewe in lovyng al hire lyf,
Wher so ye wol, of mayden or of wyf,
And forthren yow as muche as he mysseyde,
Or in the Rose, or ellès in Creseyde.' 441

The god of Love answerede hire thus
anoon,

'Madame,' quod he, 'it is so long agoon

414. *wel*, Gg omits. Gg (400-403) adds two lines
and presents the next couplet in a different form:

*Whil he was yong he kepte youre estat ;
I not wher he be now a renegat.
But wel I wot with that he can endyte
He hath makid lewede folk to delyte.*

421. *thogh the storye ys knowen lyte*, cp.
Anclida, ll. 13, 14.

424. *other holynesse*, the religion of the church
as opposed to that of Cupid.

425. Gg (414, 415) adds the lines :

*And of the Wrechede Engendrynge of Mankynde,
As man may in pope Innocent i-fynde.*

426. *Lyfe of Seynt Cecile*, now the Second
Nun's Story in *Cant. Tales*.

428. *Origenes*, a homily, De Maria Magdalene,
wrongly attributed to Origen.

That I yow knewe so charitable and trewe,
That never yit, syn that the worlde was
newe,

To me ne founde I better noon than yee ;
If that I woldè savè my degree,
I may, ne wol, nat wernè your requeste ;
Al lyeth in yow,—dooth wyth hym what
yow liste.

I al foryeve withouten lenger space ; 450
For who-so yeveth a gifte, or doth a grace,
Do it bytyme, his thank is wel the more ;
And demeth ye what he shal do therfore.
Go, thankè now my lady here,' quod he.

I roos, and doun I sette me on my knee,
And seyde thus : 'Madame, the God above
Foryeldè yow that ye the god of Love
Hath makèd me his wrathè to foryive,
And yeve me grace so longè for to lyve,
That I may knowè soothly what ye bee, 460
That han me holpe, and put me in this
degree.

But trewely I wende, as in this cas,
Naught have agilt, nedoon to Love trespas ;
For-why, a trewè man, withouten drede,
Hath nat to parten with a thevès dede ;
Ne a trewè lover oghtè me not blame,
Thogh that I spake a fals lover som shame.
They oghtè rather with me for to holde,
For that I of Creseydè wroot or tolde,
Or of the Rose,—what-so myn acoutour
mente,— 470

Algatè, God woot, it was myn entente
To forthren trouthe in love, and it cheryce,
And to ben war fro falsnesse and fro vice,
By swiche ensample ; this was my men-
yunge.'

And she answerde, 'Lat be thyn
arguyngc,

For Love ne wol nat countrèpletèd be
In ryght ne wrong, and lernè that of me ;
Thow hast thy grace, and holde the ryght
therto.

Now wol I scyn what penance thou shalt do
For thy trespas, and understonde it here :

447. *I, F ye.*

450. *I, Gg (440) And.*

459. *yeve me*, om. F⁴.

461. *this*, Gg (451) *swich*.

466. *oghte me not*, MSS. *oght me not to*.

477. *that of*, Gg (467) *this at*.

478. *the*, i.e. *thee*.

Thou shalt while that thou lyvest, yere by yere 481

The moste partye of thy tymè spende
In makyng of a glorious Legende
Of goodè wymmen, maydenès and wyves;
That weren trew in lovyng al hire lyves;
And telle of falsè men that hem bytraien,
That al here lyf ne don nat but asayen
How many women they may doon a shame,
For in youre worlde that is now holde a game.

And thogh the lykè nat a lovee bee, 490
Speke wel of love; this penance yive I the.
And to the god of Love I shal so preye,
That he shal charge his servantes, by any weye,

To forthren thee, and wel thy labour quyte:
Go now thy weye, thys penaunce is but lyte.
And whan this book is made, yive it the queene,

On my byhalfe, at Eltham, or at Sheene.⁴⁹⁰
The god of Love gan smyle, and than he sayde,

'Wostow,' quod he, 'wher this be wyf or mayde,

Or queene, or countesse, or of what degre,
That hath so lytel penance yiven thee, 501
That hast deservèd sorere for to smerte?
But pite renneth soone in gentil herte:
That maistow seen, she kytheth what she is.'

And I answerde, 'Nay, sire, so have I blys,
Na more, but that I see wel she is good.'

'That is a trewè talè, by myn hood!'
Quod Love, 'and that thou knowest wel, pardee,

If it be so that thou avisè the. 509

Hastow nat in a book, lyth in thy cheste,
The gretè goodness of the queene Alceste,
That turned was into a dayèsye?
She that for hire housbonde chees to dye,

487. Omitted in Fairfax, Tanner, and Bodley.
490. *the lyke*; it pleases thee; Gg (480) *the lestyth*.

496, 497. New lines.

497. *Eltham*. Part of the royal house, built in the thirteenth century, but enlarged by Edward IV., still remains.

497. *Sheene*, now Richmond. It was at the palace at Sheen that Anne of Bohemia died.

502. *sorere*, Bodl. and Tann. *sore*.

503. Cp. *Cant. Tales*, A 1761.

508. *that*, om. F⁴.

And eke to goon to helle, rather than he,
And Ercules rescowèd hire, *parde*,
And broght hir out of helle agayne to blys?'

And I answerd ageyn, and saydè, 'Yis,
Now knowe I hire. And is this good Alceste,

The daysic, and myn owene hertès reste?
Now fele I weel the goodnesse of this wyf,
That both after hir deth, and in hire lyf, 521
Hir gretè bountè doubleth hir renoun.

Wel hath she quyt me myn affleccioun,
That I have to hire flour the dayèsye.
No wonder is thogh Jove hire stellyffe,
As telleth Agaton, for hire goodnesse,
Hire whitè coronne berith of it witenesse;
For also many vertues haddè shee,
As smale flourens in hire coronne bee.

'In rémembraunce of hire and in honour
Cibella made the daysyc and the floure 531
Y-crowned al with white, as men may see,
And Marsyafto hire coronne reede, pardee,
In stede of rubyès, sette among the white.'

Therwith this queene wex reed for shame
a lyte,

Whanneshe was preysèd so in hire presence.
Thanneseydè Love, 'A ful grete negligence
Was it to the, that ylkè tyme thou made,
'Hyd, Absolon, thy tresses' in balade,
That thou forgate hire in thy songe to sette,
Syn that thou art so gretly in hire dette, 541
And wost so wel that kalender ys she
To any woman that wol lover be:
For she taught al the crafte of fyne lovyng,
And namely of wyfhode the lyvyng,

521. *in*, Gg (509) *ek*.

526. *Agaton*. Prof Hales has shown that the reference is to Plato's *Symposium* (in which the poet Agathon is one of the speakers), where the story of Alceste is told.

528. *haddè*, so F⁴ Pepys, Arch. Seld.; Gg *trin* ² *hath*.

531. *Cibella*, Cybele.

539-541, 543. New lines.

537-542. The Gg text (ll. 525-534) reads:

Than seyde Love, 'A ful grete neglygence
Was it to the to write *ousted fast-nesse*
Of women, si the thou knowist here goodnesse
By pres and ek by storyis hereby-foru.
Let be the chaf and writ wel of the corn.
Why noldist thou han writyn of Alceste
And latyn Criseide ben a-slepe and rest,
For of Alceste schulde thy wrytyng be,
Syn that thou wist that calandir is she
Of goodnesse, for sche taughte of fyn lovyng.

542. *so*, om. F⁴.

And al the boundès that she oghte kepe ;
Thy litel witte was thilkè tyme aslepe.

But now I chargè the upon thy lyfe, ⁵⁴⁸
That in thy legendethou make of thys wyfe,
Whan thou hast other smale y-made before ;
And fare now wel, I chargè thee namore.
But er I go, thus muche I wol the telle,
Ne shal no trewè lover come in helle.
Thise other ladies sittyng here arowe
Ben in thy balade, if thou kanst hem knowe,
And in thy bookès alle thou shalt hem fynde ;
Have hem in thy Legende now alle in
mynde,

I mene of hem that ben in thy knowyng.
For here ben twenty thousand moo sittyng
Thanne thou knowest, and ben good
woimnen alle, ⁵⁶⁰

And trewe of love for oght that may byfalle ;
Makè the metres of hem as the lest ;
I mot goon home, the sonnè draweth west,
To Paradys, with al this companye ;
And serve alwey the fressshè dayès.
At Cleopatre I wole that thou begynne,
And so forth, and my love so shalt thou
wynne ;

For lat see now what man that lover be,
Wol doon so stronge a peyne for love as she.
I wot wel that thou maist nat al it ryme,
That swichè lovers dide in hirè tyme ; ⁵⁷¹
It were to long to reden and to here ;
Sufficeth me thou make in this manere,
That thou reherce of al hir lyf the grete,
After this olde auctours lysten trete.
For who-so shal so many a storye telle,
Sey shortly, or he shal to longè dwelle.

And with that worde my bokès gan I
take,
And ryght thus on my legende gan I make.

*Incipit Legenda Cleopatrie, Martiris,
Egipti Regine.*

After the deth of Tholome the kyng, ⁵⁸⁰
That al Egipte hadde in his governyng,

^{552-565.} New lines.

^{552-565, 568-577,} not in the Gg text.

^{560.} and ben, Trin.² and ; Arch. Seld. *that ben ;*
F⁴ om.

^{575.} trete, from Arch. Seld. ; F⁶ *for to trete ;*
Trin.² *to trete.*

^{578.} *my bohes,* etc., Gg *of slep I gan awake.*

^{580.} *Tholome,* Ptolemy, probably the elder of
the two sons of Ptolemy Auletes.

Regnèd hys queenè Cleopataras ;
Til on a tyme befel ther swich a cas,
That out of Rome was sent a senatour,
For to conquèren regnès and honour
Unto the toun of Rome, as was usaunce,
To have the worlde at hir obeysaunce,
And sooth to seye, Antonius was his name.

So fil it, as Fortúne hym oght a shame,
Whanne he was fallen in prosperitee, ⁵⁹⁰
Rebel unto the toun of Rome is he.
And over al this, the suster of Cesar
He lafte hir falsly, er that she was war ;
And wold alगतès han another wyf ;
For which he took with Rome and Cesar
strif.

Natheles, forsooth, this ylkè senatour
Was a full worthy gentil werreyour,
And of his deeth it was ful gret damage.
But Love had brought this man in swich
a rage,

And him so narwè bounden in his laas,
Al for the love of Cleopataras, ⁶⁰¹
That al the worlde he sette at no value ;
Him thoughte ther was nothing to him
so due

As Cleopataras for to love and serve ;
Him roghtè nat in armès for to sterve
In the defence of hir and of hir ryght.

This noble queene ek lovedè so this
knyght,
Thurgh his desert and for his chivalrye ;
As certeynly, but-if that bookès lye,
He was of persone, and of gentillesse, ⁶¹⁰
And of discrecion, and of hardynesse,
Worthy to any wight that lyven may ;
And she was faire as is the rose in May.
And, for to maken shortly is the beste,
She wax his wif, and hadde him as hir
lest.

The weddyng and the festè to devyse,
To me that have y-takè swich emprise,
Of so many a storye for to make,
It were to longe, lest that I sholdè slake
Of thing that beryth more effecte and
charge ; ⁶²⁰

For men may overlade a shippe or barge.

^{592.} *the suster of Cesar.* Octavia, sister of
Octavianus Cesar, afterwards the Emperor
Augustus.

^{611.} *of (2),* om. Arch. Seld. and Trin.

^{614.} *for,* om. F.

And forthy to effect than wol I skyppe,
And al the remenaunt I wol leté slyppe.

Octavyan, that woode was of this dede,
Shoop him an ost on Antony to lede,
Al outerly for his destruccioun,
With stouté Romaynes, crewel as lyoun;
To shippe they wente, and thus I let
hem sayle. 628

Antanius, was war, and wol nat fayle
To meten with thise Romaynes, if he may,
Took eke his rede, and both upon a day,
His wyf and he, and al his ost, forthe wente
To shippe anon, no lenger they ne stente,
And in the see hit happed hem to mete.
Up goth the trumpe, and for to shoute
and shete,

And paynen hem to sette on with the sonne;
With grisly sounce out goth the greté gonne,
And heterly they hurtelen al attones,
And fro the top down cometh the greté
stones. 639

In gooth the grapénel so ful of crokes,
Amonge the ropés, and the sheryng hokes;
In with the polax preseth he and he;
Byhynde the maste begyneth he to fle,
And out agayn, and dryveth hem over
borde;

He stynteth hem upon his sperés orde;
He rent the sayle with hokés lyke a sithe;
He bryngeth the cuppe, and biddeth hem
be blithe; 647

He poureth pesen upon the hacches slidre;
With pottés ful of lyme, they goon togidre;
And thus the longé day in fight they spende,
Til at the last, as every thing hath ende,
Antony is shent, and put hym to the flyghte;
And al his folke to-go, that best go myghte.

Fleeth ek the queene with al hir
purple sayle,
For strokés which that wente as thik as
hayle;

623. *lete*, Gg; F⁵ *let it*.

638. *heterly*, F⁴ *hertely*.

642. *he* (2), Gg *sche*, as if the references were personal to Antony and Cleopatra!

644. *hem*, Trin., Pepys, and Add.; rest *hym*.

645. *styngeth hem*, Trin. and Add.; rest *styngeth hym*.

648. *pesen*, peas to make the decks slippery.

654. Chaucer here follows the 'regina cum aurea puppe veloque purpureo se in altum dedit' of Florus.

No wonder was she myght it nat endure.
And whan that Antony saugh that aventure,
'Allas,' quod he, 'the day that I was borne!
My worshippe in this day thus have I lorne!'
And for dispeyre out of his wytte he sterte,
And roof hymself anon thurghout the herte,
Er that he ferther went out of the place.
His wyf, that koude of Cesar haveno grace,
To Egipte is fled, for drede and for dis-
trece.

But herkeneth ye, that speken of
kyndenesse.

Ye men that falsly sweren many an othe,
That ye wol dye if that your love be wrothe,
Heremay yeseen of women which a trouthe.
This wolful Cleopatre hath made swich
routhe, 669

That ther nys tongé noon that may it telle.
But on the morowe she wol no lenger dwelle,
But made hir subtil werkmen make a shryne
Of al the rubees and the stonés fyne

In Egipté that she koude espye;
And putté ful the shryne of spicerye,
And let the corps embawme; and forth
she fette

This dedé corps, and in the shryne it shette.
And next the shryne a pitte than doth
she grave,

And alle the serpentes that she myghté have,
She put hem in that grave, and thus she
seyde: 680

'Now, love, to whom my sorweful herte
obeyde

So ferforthly that fro that blysfyl houre
That I yow swor to ben al frely youre,—
I mené yow, Antonius, my knyght,—
That never wakyng in the day or nyght
Ye nere out of myn hertés rémembraunce,
For wele or woo, for carole, or for daunce;
And in my self this covenant made I tho,
That ryght swich as ye felten wele or wo,
As ferforth as it in my powere lay, 690

Unréprováble unto my wifhood ay,
The samé wolde I felen, life or deethe;
And thilké covenant, while me lasteth
breethe,

I wol fulfille; and that shal wel be seene,
Was never unto hir love a trewer queene.'

662. Actium was fought in Sept. of 31 B.C.;
Antony killed himself the next year.

And wyth that worde, naked, with ful
good herte,

Amonge the serpents in the pit she sterte;
And ther she chees to han hir buryng.

Anon the neddres gonne hir for to styng,
And she hir deeth receyvethe with good chere,
For love of Antony that was hir o dore.
And this is storial sooth, it is no fable. 702

Now er I fynde a man thus trewe and
stable,

And wolde for love his deeth so frely take,
I prey God lat oure hedës nevere ake!

Explicit Legenda Cleopatre, Martyris

Incipit Legende Tesba Babilon, Martiris

At Babiloyne whilom fil it thus,—

The whichë toun the queene Semyramus
Leet dichen al about, and wallës make
Ful hye, of hardë tilës wel y-bake: 709
There werë dwellynge in this noble toun
Two lordës, which that were of grete
renoune,

And wonëden so neigh upon a grene,
That ther nas but a stoon wal hem betwene,
As ofte in grettë tounës is the wone.
And sooth to seyn, that o man had a sone,
Of al that londe oon of the lustieste;
That other had a doghtre, the faireste
That esteward in the worldë was tho
dwellynge. 718

The name of every chegan to others pryng,
By wommen that were neyghcbores aboute;
For in that contre yit, withouten doute,
Máydens ben y-kept for jelousye
Ful streytë, lestë they didnen somme folye.

This yongë man was clepëd Piramus,
And Tesbe highte the maide,—Naso seith
thus.

And thus by réporte was hir name y-shove,
That as they wex in agë, wex hir love.
And certeyn, as by reson of hir age, 728
Ther myghte have ben betwex hem
marriage,

But that hir fadres nold it not assente,
And both in love y-likë soore they brente,
That noon of al hir frendës myghte it lette.

706-776. Missing in Pepys.

716. of, om. F³.

725. And, in Gg only.

But prevely somtymë yit they mette
Bysleight, and spoken somme of hir desire,
As wre the glede and hotter is the fire;
Forbeede a love, and it is ten so woode.

This wal, which that bitwixe hem bothë
stoode,

Was cloven a-two, right fro the toppe
adoun,

Of oldë tyme, of his foundacioun. 739

But yit this clyftë was so narwe and lite

It was nat seenë, deere ynogh a myte;

But what is that that love kannat espye?

Ye lovers two, if that I shal nat lye,

Ye founden first this litel narwë clifte,

And with a soun as softe as any shryfte,

They leete hir wordës thurgh the cliftë pace,

And tolden, while they stoden in the place,

Al hire compleynt of love, and al hire wo.

At every tymë whan they dorstë so.

Upon the o syde of the walle stood he,

And on that other sydë stood Tesbe, 751

The swootë soun of other to receyve.

And thus here wardeyns woldë they
disceyve,

And every day this walle they woldë threete,

And wisshe to God that it were doun y-bete,

Thus wolde they seyn: 'Allas, thou
wikked walle!

Thurgh thyn envýë thou us lettest alle!

Why nyltow cleve, or fallen al a-two?

Or at the leestë, but thou wouldest so,

Yit woldestow but onës let us meete, 760

Or onës that we myghtë kyssen sweete,

Than were we covered of oure carës colde.

But nathëles, yit be we to thee holde,

In as muche as thou suffrest for to goon

Our wordës thurgh thy lyme and eke thy
stoon;

Yet oghtë we with the ben wel apayedë.'

And whan these idel wordës weren sayde,

The coldë walle they wolden kyssë of stoon,

And take hir leve, and forth they wolden
goon.

And this was gladly in the evëtyde, 770

Or wonder crly, lest men it espyede.

And longë tyme they wroght in this manere,

Til on a day, whan Phebus gan to clere—

741. deere ynogh a myte, ever so little.

747. they, Trin.²; rest that they.

770. And, F Alle.

Aurora with the stremès of hire hete
 Had drièd uppe the dewe of herbès wete—
 Unto this clyfte, as it was wont to be,
 Come Piramus, and after come Tesbe.
 And plighthen trouthe fully in here faye,
 That ilk samè nyght to steele awaye,
 And to begile hire wardeyns everychone,
 And forth out of the citce for to gone. 781
 And, for the feeldès ben so broode and wide,
 For to meete in o place at o tyde
 They settè markes, hire metyng sholdè bee
 Ther kyng Nynus was graven, under a
 tree, —

For oldè payens, that ydolès heriede,
 Useden tho in feeldès to ben beriede, —
 And fastè by his gravè was a welle.
 And, shortly of this talè for to telle, 789
 This covenaut was affermèd wonder faste,
 And longe hem thoughtè that the sonnè laste,
 That it nere goon under the see adoun.

This Tesbe hath so grete affecciou, 800
 And so grete lykyng Piramus to see,
 That whan she seigh hire tymè myghtè bee,
 At nyght she stalc away ful prevèly,
 With hire face y-wympled subtilly.
 For al hire frendès, for to save hire trouthe,
 She hath forsake; alas, and that is routhe,
 That ever woman woldè be so trewe 800
 To trusten man, but she the bet hym knewe!

And to the tree she goth a ful goode paas,
 For love made hir so hardy in this caas;
 And by the welle adoun she gan hir dresse.
 Allas! than comith a wildè leonesse
 Out of the woode, withouten more arreste,
 With bloody mouth, of strangelynge of a
 beste,

To drynken of the welle ther as she sat.
 And whan that Tesbe had espyèd that,
 She ryst hir up, with a ful drery herte, 810
 And in a cave with dredful foot she sterte,
 For by the moone she saugh it wel withalle.
 And as she ranne, hir wympel leet she falle,
 And tooke noon hede, so sore she was
 awhaped,
 And eke so gladè that she was escaped;
 And ther she sytte, and darketh wonder
 stille.

785. *Nynus*, the mythical founder of Nineveh,
 for whom Semiramis built a tomb.

815. *glade*, 'Trin. glad of.

Whan that this lyonesse hath dronke hire
 fille,

Aboute the wellè gan she for to wynde,
 And ryght anon the wympil gan she fynde,
 And with hir bloody mouth it al to-rente.
 Whan this was don, no longer she nestente,
 But to the woode hir wey than hath she
 nome. 822

And at the laste this Piramus is come,
 But al to longe, allas, at home was hee!
 The moonè shone, men myghtè wel y-sec,
 And in his wey, as that he come ful faste,
 Hise eyen to the grounde adoun he caste;
 And in the sonde as he behelde adoun,
 He seigh the steppès broode of a lyoun;
 And in his herte he sodeynly agroos, 830
 And pale he wex, therwith his heer aroos,
 And nere he come, and founde the wympil
 torne.

'Allas,' quod he, 'the day that I was borne!
 This o nyght wol us lovers bothè slee!
 How shulde I axen mercy of Tesbe,
 Whan I am he that have yow slayne, allas?
 My byddyng hath i-slayn yow in this caas!
 Allas, to biddè a woman goon by nyghte
 In placè ther as peril fallen myghte!
 And I so slowe! allas, I ne hardè be 840
 Here in this place, a furlong wey or ye!
 Now what lyon that be in this foreste,
 My body mote he renten, or what beste
 That wilde is, gnawen mote he now my
 herte!'

And with that worde he to the wympil
 sterte,
 And kiste it ofte, and wepte on it ful sore;
 And seyde, 'Wympil, allas! ther nys no
 more,
 But thou shalt feeleas wel the blode of me,
 As thou hast felt the bledyinge of Tesbe.'
 And with that worde he smot hym to the
 herte; 850

The blood out of the wounde as brode
 sterte

As water, whan the conduyte broken is.

Now Tesbe, which that wist nat of this,
 But sytting in hire drede, she thoughtè thus:
 'If it so fallè that my Piramus
 Be comen hider, and may me nat y-fynde,

852. *whan the conduyte broken is*. The meta-
 phor is transferred from Ovid, *Met.* iv. 122-124.

He may me holden fals, and eke unkynde.
And oute she comith, and after hym gan
espren

Bóthé with hire herte and with hire eyen;
And thoghte, 'I wol him tellen of my
drede, 860

Bothe of the lyonesse and al my dede.'
And at the laste hire love than hath she
founde,

Bétynge with his helis on the grounde,
Al bloody; and therwithal abak she sterte,
And lyke the wawés quappé gan hir herte,
And pale as boxe she wax, and in a throwe
Aviséd hir, and gan him wel to knowe,
That it was Piramus, hire herté dere.

Who koudé writé which a dedely chere
Hath Tesbe now? and how hire heere she
rente? 870

And how she gan hir-selvé to turmente?
And how she lyth and swowneth on the
grounde?

And how she wepe of terés ful his wounde?
How medleth she his blood with hir com-
pleynte?

How with his blood hir-selven gan she
peynte?

How clippeth she the dedé corps? alas!
How doth this woful Tesbe in this cas?
How kysseth she his frosty mouthe so
colde?

'Who hath don this? and who hath ben
so bolde 879

To sleen my leefé? O speké, Piramus!
I am thy Tesbe, that thee calleth thus!
And therewithal she lyfeth up his heed.

This woful man, that was nat fully
deed,

Whan that he herde the name of Tesbe
crien,

On hire he caste his hevvy dedely eyen,
And doun agayn, and yeldeth up the
goste.

Tesbe rist uppe, withouten noyse or
boste,

And saugh hir wympel and his empty
shethe,

And eke his swerde, that him hath don
to dethe.

866. *pale as boxe*, Ovid's 'oraque buxo Pallidi-
ora gerens,' *Met.* iv. 134, 135.

Than spake she thus: 'Thy woful hande,'
quod she, 890

'Is strong ynogh in swiche a werke to me;
For love shal me yive strengthe and
hardynesse,

To make my woundé large ynogh, I gesse.
I wole the folowen ded, and I wol be
Felawe and cause eke of thy deeth,' quod
she.

'And thogh that nothings save the deth only
Myghte the fro me departé trewely,
Thou shal no more departé now fro me
Than fro the deth, for I wol go with the.

'And now, ye wrecched jelouse fadrés
oure, 900

Wé, that weren whilome children youre,
We prayen yow, withouten more envye,
That in o grave i-fere we moten lye,
Syn love hath broght us to this pitouse ende.
And ryghtwis God to every lover sende,
That loveth trewely, more prosperite
Than ever haddé Piramus and Tesbe.

And let no gentile woman hire assure,
To putten hire in swiche an aventure.
But God forbedé but a woman kan 910

Ben also trewe and lovyng as a man,
And for my parte I shal anon it kythe.'
And with that worde his swerde she took
as swithe,

That warme was of hire lovés blood, and
hote,

And to the herté she hire-selven smote.

And thus are Tesbe and Piramus ago.

Of trewe men I fyndé but fewe mo
In al my bookés, save this Piramus,

And therfore have I spoken of hym thus
For it is deyntee to us men to fynde 920

A man that kan in love be trewe and
kynde.

Here may ye seen, what lover so he be,
A woman dar and kan as wel as he.

Explicit Legenda Tesbe

890. *Thy*, Gg corrects to *Myn*; but perhaps a
couplet has fallen out. Chaucer is translating
Metamorphoses, iv. 147-149:

*Tua te manus, inquit, amorque
Perdidit, infelix. Est et mihi fortis in unum
Hoc manus: est et amor, etc.*

898. *F³ noo more now depart.*

903. *i-fere*, only in Trin. and Add.

904. *F³ hath us broght.*

911. *also*, Add. only; Trin. *als*; rest *as*.

*Incipit Legenda Didonis, Martiris,
Carthaginiis Regine*

Glorie and honour, Virgile Mantuan,
Be to thy name ! and I shal, as I kan,
Folowe thy lanterne as thou goste byforn.
How Eneas to Dido was forsworne—
In thyne Eneyde and Naso wol I take ⁹²⁸
The tenour, and the grete effectes make.

Whan Troye broght was to destruccion
By Grekes sleight, and namely by Synon,
Feynnyng the hors offred unto Minerve,
Thurgh which that many a Trojan moste
sterve,

And Ector had after his deeth appered,
And fire so woode it myghte nat ben stered,
In al the noble tour of Ylion,
That of the citee was the cheef dungeon;
And al the contree was so lowe y-broght,
And Priamus, the kyng, fordoon and noght;
And Eneas was chargyd by Venus ⁹⁴⁰
To fleen away, he tooke Ascanius,
That was his sone, in his ryght hande
and fledde,

And on his bakke he baar, and with him
ledde,

His oldé fader, eleped Anchises;
And by the wey his wyf Creusa he lees,
And mochel sorowe hadde he in his mynde,
Er that he koude his felawshippé fynde.
But at the lasté, whan he hadde hem
founde,

He made him redy in a certeyn stounde,
And to the see ful faste he gan him hye, ⁹⁵⁰
And sayleth forth with al his companye
Towarde Ytyle, as wolde his destanee.
But of his áventurés in the see
Nys nat to purpos for to speke of here,
For it acordeth nat to my matere.
But as I seyde, of hym and of Dydo
Shal be my tale, til that I have do.

So longe he saylléd in the salté see,
Til in Lybye unneth arryved he,
With schepis sevene and with no more
navye, ⁹⁶⁰

928. *Naso*, Ovid in his *Heroides*, Ep. vii.

931. *Synon*, cp. *Æneid*, ii. 57-198.

934. *Ector*. Hector's ghost warned Æneas to
flee from Troy, cp. *Æn.* ii. 270-277.

952. *his*, om. F².

960, 961. Only in Gg and Pepys.

And glad was he to londé for to hye,
So was he with the tempest al to-shake.
And whan that he the havene had y-take,
He had a knyghte was calléd Achates,
And him of al his felawshippe he ches
To goon with him, the contree for tospyce.
He toke with him na moré companye,
But forth they goon, and lafte his shippés
ride,

His fere and he, withouten any guyde.

So longe he walketh in this wilderness,
Til at the last he mette an hunteresse; ⁹⁷¹
A bowe in hande, and arwés haddé shee;
Hire clothés cuttid were unto the knece.

But she was yit the fairest creature
That ever was y-formed by nature;
And Eneas and Achates she grette,
And thus she to hem spak whan she hem
mette,

'Sawe ye,' quod she, 'as ye han walked
wide,

Any of my sustren walké yow besyde,
With any wildé boor or other beste, ⁹⁸⁰
That they han hunted to in this foreste,
Y-tukked up, with arwés in hire cas?'

'Nay soothly, lady!' quod this Encas;
'But by thy beaute, as it thynketh me,
Thou myghtest never erthely woman be,
But Phebus suster artow, as I gesse.

And if so be that thou be a goddesse,
Have mercy on oure labour and oure wo.'

'I nam no goddesse soothely,' quod
she tho;

'For maydens walken in this contree
here, ⁹⁹⁰

With arwés and with bowe, in this manere.
This is the regne of Libie ther ye been,
Of which that Dido lady is and queene.'

And shortly tolde al the occasioun
Why Dido come into that regioun,
Of which as now me lusteth nat to ryme;
It nedeth nat, it nere but los of tyme.

For this is al and somme; it was Venus,
Hii owene moder, that spake with hir
thus;

971 *sqg.* Cp. *Æn.* i. 314-417.

973. *cuttid*, F² *knytte*. Virgil's 'nuda genu
nodoque sinus collecta fluentis' might suggest
either word.

982. *Y-tukked up*, etc., Virgil's 'succinctam
pharetra.'

And to Cartage she bad he sholde him
dighte, 1000

And varysshéd anoon out of his sighte,
I koudè folwe worde for worde Virgile,
But it wolde lasten al to longè while.

This noble queene, that clepèd was
Dido,

That whilom was the wife of Sitheo,
That fairer was than is the bryghtè sonne,
This noble toun of Cartage hath begonne;
In which she regneth in so grete honoure,
That she was holde of allè quenès floure,
Of gentillesse, of fredome, of beautee,
That wel was him that myght hir onès see.
Of kyngès and of lordès so desired, 1012
That al the worlde hire beaute hadde
y-fired,

She stode so wel in every wyghtès grace.

Whan Encas was come unto that place,
Unto the maistre temple of al the toun,
Ther Dido was in hir devocioun,
Ful prively his wey than hath he nome.
Whan he was in the largè temple come,—
I kannat seye if that hit be possible,—
But Venus hadde him makèd invisible;
Thus seith the booke, withouten any les.

And whan this Encas and Achates
Hadden in this temple ben over-alle,
Than foundè they depeynted on a walle
How Troy and al the londe destroyed
was.

‘Allas, that I was born!’ quod Encas.
‘Thurghout the worlde oure shame is
kid so wide,

Now it is peynted upon every side.

Wé, that weren in prosperitee, 1030
Be now disclaundred, and in swiche degre,
No longer for to lyven I ne kepe.’

And with that worde he braste out for to
wepe

So tendirly that routhe it was to seene.

This fresshè lady, of the citee queene,
Stode in the temple, in hire estat royalle,
So richely, and eke so faire withalle,
So yonge, so lusty, with hire eyen glade,
That if that God, that hevene and erthè
made,

Wolde han a love, for beaute and
goodnesse, 1040

And womanhode, and trouthe, and
semlynnesse.

Whom sholde he loven but this ladyswete?
Ther nys no woman to him half so mete.
Fortune, that hath the worlde in
gouvernaunce,

Hath sodeynly broght in so newe a chaunce,
That never was ther yet so fremde a cas.

For al the companye of Encas,
Which that he wende han loren in the see,
Aryved is, noght fer fro that citee. 1049

For which the grettest of his lordès, some,
By aventure ben to the citee come,
Unto that samè temple, for to seke
The queene, and of hire socour hir beseke;
Swich rénowne was ther spronge of hir
goodnesse.

And whan they haddè tolde al hire
distresse,

And al hir tempest and hire hardè cas,
Unto the queene apperèd Encas,
And openly beknew that it was he.
Who haddè joyè thanne but his meynee,
That hadden founde hire lord, hire
gouvernour? 1060

The queene saugh they dide him swich
honour,

And had herde ofte of Eneas er tho,
And in hir hertè she hadde routhe and wo,
That ever swiche a noble man as hee
Shal ben disherited in swiche degre.
And saugh the man, that he was lyke a
knyghte,

And suffisaunt of persone and of myghte,
And lyke to ben a verray gentilman.

And wel his wordès he besettè kan, 1069
And hadde a noble visage for the nones,
And formèd wel of brawnès and of bones;
For after Venus hadde he swich fairnesse,
That no man myghte be half so faire, I gesse,
And wel a lorde he semede for to be.
And for he was a straunger, somewhat she
Lykèd him the bette, as, God do bote,
To somme folke often newè thinge isswote.

1046. *never was ther yet*, so Trin. and Thynne;
Arch. Seld. *never yet was sene*; Add. om. *yet*;
rest om. *ther*.

1074. *he*, so Gg Add. Pepys; rest *him*.

1005. *Sitheo*, Sichæus.

1006. *is*, om. all but Gg and Add.

1030. *were*, Trin. and Add. *were whilom*.

Anon hire herte hath pitee of his wo,
And with that pitee, love come in also ;
And thus for pitee and for gentilnesse,
Refresshéd mote he ben of his distresse.

She seyde, certès, that she sory was
That he hath had swich peril and swiche
cas ;

And in hire frendely speche, in this manere
She to him spake, and seyde as ye may here.

' Be ye nat Venus' sone and Anchises' ?
In good faythe, al the worshippe and ences
That I may goodly doon yow, ye shal have :
Youre shippès and youre meynee shal I
save.'

And many a gentil worde she spake him to,
And comaunded hire messagers to go
The samè day, withouten any faylle, 1092
His shippès for to seke and hem vitaylle.
Ful many a beeste she to the shippès sente,
And with the wynes he gan hem to presente,
And to hire royall paleys she hire spedde,
And Eneas alwey with hire she ledde.
What nedeth yow the festè to discryve ?
He never better at ese was in his lyve.
Ful was the feste of deyntees and richesse,
Of instruments, of songe, and of gladnesse,
And many an amorous loking and devys.

This Encas is comen to Paradyss
Out of the wolowe of helle ; and thus in joye
Remembreth him of his estaat in Troye.
To daunsyng chambres, ful of parements,
Of richè beddès, and of ornaments,
This Encas is ladde after the meete.
And with the queenè whan that he
hadde seete 1109

And spices parted, and the wyne agon,
Unto his chambrès was he lad anon
To take his ease, and for to have his reste
With al his folke, to doon what so hem leste.

Thér nas coursere, wel y-bridled, noon,
Ne stedè for the justyng wel to goon,
Ne largè palfrey, esy for the nones,
Ne juwel fretted ful of richè stones,
Ne sakkès ful of gold, of largè wyghte,
Ne rubee noon that shynéd by nyghte,

1099. Gg *He nevere at ese was betyr in al hese lyve.*

1107. *ornaments*, so Gg Trin. Add. ; F6 *pave-ments.*

1119. *shynede*, Gg Trin. Pepys ; Add. *shone* ; F6 *shineth.*

Ne gentil hawteyn faukone heroneer,
Ne hound for hert, or wildè boor or deer,
Ne coupe of golde, with floryns newe
y-bette, 1122

That in the londe of Lybye may ben gette,
That Dido ne hath hit Eneas i-sente ;
And al is payéd, what that he hath spente.
Thus gan this queene honoure hir gastes
talle,

As she that kan in fredome passen alle.

Eneas soothly eke, withouten les,
Hath sent unto his shippe by Achates
After his sone, and after rychè thynges,
Both ceptre, clothès, brochès, and eke
rynges ; 1131

Somme for to were, and somme for to
presente

To hire, that alle thise noble thinges
him sente ;

And bad his sone how that he sholdè make
The presentynge, and to the queene it take.

Repeyrd is this Achates agayne,
And Eneas ful blysfyl is and fayne,
To seen his yongè sone Ascanius.

But natheles our autour tellith us 1139
That Cupido, that is the god of love,
At prayere of hys moder hyc above,
Haddè the liknesse of the childe y-take,
This noble queen enamourèd to make
On Eneas. But as of that scripture
Be as he may, I make of it no cure.
But sooth is this, the queene hath made
swich chere

Unto this childe that wonder is to here ;
And of the present that his fader sente,
She thankèd him ful ofte in goode intende.

Thus is this queene in pleasaunce and
in joye, 1150

With al thise newè lusty folke of Troye.
And of the dedès hath she more enquired
Of Eneas, and al the storie lered

1126. MSS. read *Thus kan* (Add. *ganne*) *this honourable queene hir gastes* (Pepys, *giftes*) *calle*, where *calle* is plainly a misreading of the complimentary epithet *talle*. This would make the verb *honoure* impossible, and so lead to the substitution of *honourable*. Another possible restoration would be *Thus yaf this noble queene hir giftes talle*. The reading *talle* is due to Dr. Heath.

1139. So Gg and Pepys ; F4 *For to him yt was reported thus* ; other variants show that the line was corrupted.

Of Troye; and al the longé day they tweye
Entendeden to speken and to pleye.

Of which ther gan to breden swich a fire,
That sely Dido hath now swich desire
With Eneas, hir newé gestic, to deele,
That she hath loste hire hewe and eke
hire heele.

Now to theffecte, now to the fruyt of al,
Why I have tolde this storye, and tellen
shal, 1167

Thus I bygynne: It fil upon a nyght,
Whan that the moone upreyséd had hire
lyght,

This noble queene unto hire resté wente.
She siketh sore, and gan hire - selfe
turmente;

She waketh, walwithe, maketh many a
brayde,
As doon thise lovers, as I have herde
sayde;

And at the laste, unto hire suster Anne
She made hir mone, and ryght thus
spake she thanne. 1169

'Now, deré suster myn, what may it be
That me agasteth in my dreame?' quod she.
'This ilké Trojane is so in my thoughte,

For that methinketh heissowely-wroghte,
And eke so likly for to ben a man,
And therwithal so mykel good he kan,

That al my love and lyf lyth in his cure.
Have ye nat herde hym telle his aventure?
Now certes, Anne, gif that ye redé me,

I woldé fayne to him y-wedded be; 1179
This is theffect; what sholde I moré seyn?
In him lith alle, to doo me lyve or deyn.'

Hir suster Anne, as she that kouth
hire goode,

Seyde as hire thought, and somdel it
withstode.

But herof was so longe a sermonyng,
It were to longe to maké reheryng.

But, finally, it may nat be withstonde:
Lové woll love, for no wyght wol it wonde.

The dawényng upryst oute of the see;
This amoureuse queené chargeth hire
meynce

1155. So Gg; rest *For to speke and for to pleye.*

1163. *hire*, Gg *his*.

1174. *for*, om. F⁵.

1178. *redé*, Gg *reile* it.

The nettés dresse, and sperés brood and
kenc; 1190

An huntynge wol this lusty fressshé queene,
So priketh hire this newé joly wo.

To hors is al hire lusty folke y-go;
Unto the courte the houndés ben
y-broughte,

And upon coursers, swyfte as any thoughte,
Hir yongé knyghtés hoven al aboute,
And of hir women eke an hugé route.

Upon a thikké palfrey, paper white, 1198
With saddle rede, enbroudet with delyte,
Of golde the barrés up enboséd heighe,

Sitte Dido, al in golde and perrey wreighe.
And she is faire as is the bryghté morwe,
That heeleth seké folkes of nyghtés sorwe.

Upon a coursere, startlyng as the fire,—
Men myghté turne him with a lytel wire,—
Sitte Eneas, like Phebus to devyse,

So was he fressh arrayéd in his wyse.
The fomy bridel, with the bitte of golde,
Governeth he, ryght as himselfe hathe
wolde. 1209

And forth this noble queene, this lady, ride
On huntynge, with this Trojan by hire syde.

The herde of hertés founden is anon,
With 'Hay!' 'Go bet!' 'Prik thou!'
'Lat gon, lat gon!'

'Why nyl the lyoun comen, or the bere,
That I myght hym onés meten with this
spere?'

Thus seyn thise yongé folke, and up they
kylle

The wildé hertes, and han hem at here wille.
Amonges al this, to romblen gan the
hevene;

The thonder rored with a grisly stevene;
Doun come the rayne, with haile and
sleet, so faste, 1220

With hevenes fire, that it so sore agaste
This noble queene, and also hire meynee,
That yche of hem was glad away to flee;

And shortly, fro the tempest hire to save,
She fled hire-selfe into a lytel cave,
And with hire wente this Encas also.

I not with hem if ther went any mo;
The auctour maketh of hit no mencion.
And here beganne the depe affeccoun
Betwix hem two; this was the firsté morwe

1195. *coursers*, F⁵ *coursere*.

Of hire gladnesse, and gynnyng of hir
sprwe. 1231

For there hath Eneas y-knelcd so,
And tolde hir al his herte and al his wo,
And sworne so depc to hire to be trewe
For wele or wo, and chaungc for no newe,
And, as a fals lover, so wel kan pleyne,
That sely Dido rewcd on his peyne,
And toke hym for housbonde, and became
his wife

For evermor, while that hem lastc lyfe.
And after this, whan that the tempest
stente, 1240

With myrth, out as they comc, home they
wente.

The wikked fame up ros, and that anon,
How Eneas hath with the queene y-gon
Into the cave, and demcd as hem liste.
And whan the kyngc that Yarbys hight
hit wiste,

As he that had hire lovcd ever his lyfe,
And wowcd hire to have hire to hys wife,
Swiche sorowe as he hath makcd, and
swiche chere,

It is a rewthe and pitec for to here.
But as in love alday it happeth so, 1250
That oon shal lawghen at another's wo ;
Now lawgheth Eneas, and is in joye,
And more richc than ever was in Troye.

O sely woman, ful of innocence,
Ful of pitec, of trouthe, and conscience,
What makcd yow to men to trusten so ?
Have ye suche rewthe upon hir feyncd wo,
And han suche olde ensamples yow
beforne ?

Se ye nat allc how they ben forsworne ?
Where se ye oon that he ne hath lafte
his leefe ? 1260

Or ben unkynde, or don hir some
myscheefe ?

Or pillcd hir, or bosted of his dede ?
Ye may as wel hit seen as ye may rede.
Take hede now of this gretc gentilman,
This Trojan, that so wel hire plesc kan,
That feyneth him so trewe and obeysinge,
So gentil, and so privy of his doynge ;
And kan so wel doon al his obeysaunces,

And waytyn hir, at festcs and at daunces,
And whan she gooth to temple, and home
ageyne, 1270

And fasten til he hath his lady seyne ;
And beren in his devyses for hire sake
Wot I not what ; and songcs wolde he
make,

Justen, and doon of armcs many thynges,
Sencd hire letres, tokens, brochcs, rynges.
Now herkneth how he shal his lady serve.

Ther as he was in peril for to sterve
For hunger and for myscheef in the see,
And desolate, and fledde fro his contree,
And al his folke with tempestal to-driven,
She hath hir body and eke hir reame given
Into his hande, theras she myghte have
bene 1282

Of other lande than of Cartage a queene,
And lyved in joy ynogh ; what wolde ye
more ?

This Encas, that hath thus depe y-swore,
Is wery of his crafte within a throwe ;
The hootc erneste is al overblowe.
And privcly he doth his shippcs dyghte,
And shapeth him to steeleaway by nyghte.

This Dido hath suspecion of this, 1290
And thoughtc wel that hit was al amys ;
For in his bedde he lyth a nyght and siketh,
She asketh him anon what him mysliketh.

'Myderc herte, which that I lovemoste,
Certcs,' quod he, 'thys nyght my sadres
goste

Hath in my slepe so sorc me turmentede,
And eke Mercure his message hath pre-
sentedc,

That nedcs to the conqueste of Ytayle
My destany is soonc for to sayle,
For whiche me thynketh brosten is myn
herte.' 1300

Therwith his falsc teercs oute they sterte,
And taketh hir within his armcs two.

'Is that in earnest ?' quod she ; 'wol ye
so ?

Have ye nat sworne to wifc me to take ?
Allas, what woman wol ye of me make ?
I am a gentil woman, and a queene ;
Ye wol nat fro your wyfe thus foulc fleene !
That I was borne, allas ! Whatshal I do ?'

1235. *chaunge*, Gg and Pepys: *chaunge hire*.

1242. *The wikked fame*. Virgil's 'Fama, malum quæ non aliud velocius ullum,' *Æn.* iv. 174.

1269. *And waytyn*, Gg only ; Trin.² *And pleyyn* ; rest *To*.

To telle inshort, this noble queene Dido
She seketh halwës, and doth sacrificise ;
She kneleth, crieth, that routhe is to
devyse ; 1311

Conjureth him, and profereth him to be
His thral, his servant, in the lest degree.
She falleth him to foote, and swowneth
there,

Disshively with hire bryghte giltè here,
And seith, 'I have mercy ! let me with
yow ryde ;

Theselordës, which that wonien me besyde,
Wol me destroyen only for youre sake.

And so ye wole now me to wifè take,
As ye han sworn, than wol I yive yow leve
To sleen me with your swerd now soone
at eve ; 1321

For than shal I yet dien as youre wifè.
I am with childe, and yive my childe his
lyfe !

Mércy, lorde, have piteein youre thought !'
But al this thing awayleth hire ryght
nought,

For on a nyght sleping he let hir lye,
And staal away upon his companye,
And as a traytour forthe he gan to sayle
Towarde the largè contree of Itayle.

And thus he lefte Dido in wo and pyne,
And weddid there a lady highte Lavyne.
A cloth he lefte, and eke his swerde
stondynge, 1332

Whan he fro Dido staal in hire slepyng,
Righte at hir beddës hed : so gan he hye,
Whanne that he staal away to his navye.

Which cloth, whansely Didoganawake,
She hath it kyste ful oftè for hys sake ;
And seyde, 'O swete cloth, while [Jove]
hit leste,

Take now my soule, unbynde me of this
unreste ; 1339

1319. so, om. F⁵.

1324. have, Gg. haveyth.

1330. And thus he lefte, Trin.³ ; Gg. Thus he
hath lefte ; F⁴ And thus hath he lefte.

1338. Trin.³ om. swete, but Chaucer is trans-
lating the 'Dulces exuvia, dum fata deusque
sinebant' of *Æn.* iv. 651, and, like 'dulces,' swete
is emphatic. 'To mend the line I read Jove for
Jupiter of MSS.

1339. now, om. F⁵.

1339. unbynde me, Virgil's 'accipite hanc
animam meque his exsolvite curis' ; Gg reads and
brynge it.

I have fulfilled of fortune al the cours.'
And thus, allas, withouten his socours,
Twentytyme-swowned hath she thanne.
And whan that she unto hir suster Anne
Compleyned had, of which I may not write,
So gretè routhe I have hit for to endite,
And bad hir noryce and hir sustren gon
To fèch fire, and other thinges anon,
And seyde that she woldè sacrifie,—
And whan she myght hir tymè wel espye,
Upon the fire of sacrifice she sterte, 1350
And with his swerde she roof hire to the
herte.

But, as myn auctour seythe, yit thus she
seyde,

Or she was hurte, beforne or she deide,
She wroot a letter anon, that thus biganne.

'Ryght so,' quod she, 'as that the whitè
swanne

Ayentst his deeth begynneth for to synge,
Ryght so to yow I make my compleynyng,
Nat that I trowe to geten yow agayne,
For wel I woot that hit is al in vayne,
Syn that the goddys ben contrary to me.
But syn my name is loste thurgh yow,'
quod she, 1361

'I may wel leese a worde on yow, or letter,
Albeit I shal be never the better.

For thilkè wynde that blew yourshipaway,
Thesamè wynde hath blowe away your say.'
But who wol al this letter have in mynde,
Rede Ovyde, and in him he shal hit fynde.

*Explicit Legenda Didonis, Martiris,
Cartagenis Regine*

*Incipit Legenda Ysiphile et Medee,
Martiris*

Thou roote of falsè lovers, duke Jason !
Thou slye devourer, and confusyon
Of gentil women, gentil créatures ! 1370
Thou madest thy reclaymyng and thy lures
To ladies of thy statelý aparauce,
And of thy wordès farsed with plesaunce,

1352. myn auctour, now Ovid (*Heroides*, vii.).

1360. contrary, F⁴ contrariouse.

1366. who wol al, so Pepys and Tan. ; Gg F²
Th. whoso wol al ; Trin.² who that wyl ; Ar.
Seld. whoso wol.

1367. Pepys MS. stops here.

1370. So F⁴ and P ; Gg for first and Trin.³ for
second gentil read *indre*.

And of thy feyned trouthe, and thy manere,
With thyne obeysaunce and humble chere,
And with thy countrefeted peyn and wo !
Ther other falsen oon, thou falseste two !
O, oftē swore thou that thou woldest deye
For love, whan thou ne selteste maladeye,
Save foule delyte, which that thou callest
love !

1380
If that I lyve, thy namē shal be shove
In Englyssh, that thy sleightē shal be
knowe ;
Have at the, Jason ! now thyn horn is
blowe !

But certēs, it is bothē routhe and wo,
That love with falsē lovers werketh so ;
For they shalle have wel better and gretter
chere

Than he that hath a-boughte his love ful
dere,

Or had in armēs many a bloody box.
For ever as tender a capon eteth the fox,
Though he be fals, and hath the foule
betrayed,

1390
As shal the good man that therfor hath
payed ;

Al have he to the capon skille and ryghte,
The falsē fox wil have his part at nyghte.
On Jason this ensample is wel y-scene,
By Isiphile and Médea the queene.

In Tessalye, as Guido telleth us,
Ther was a kyng that hightē Pellēus,
That had a brother whiche that hight Eson ;
And whan for age he myghte unnethēs gon,
He yaf to Pellēus the governynge 1400
Of al his regne, and made him lorde and
kyng.

Of whiche Eson this Jason geten was,
That in his tyme in al that lande ther nas
Nat suche a famouse knyghte of gentillesse,
Of fredome, and of strengthe, and lusty-
nesse.

After his fader deeth he bar him so,
That there nas noon that lystē ben his fo,

1387. *a-boughte*, F³ *bought*. *his*, om. F⁴.

1391. *hath*, Gg only ; rest om.

1392. *Al have he*, F² *Alle thof he have*.

1395. *Isiphile*, Hypsiphele.

1396. *Guido*, i.e. Guido delle Colonne in his
Historia Trojana ; F⁴ *Ovyde*.

1397. *kyng*, F³ *knyght*.

1405. *and of strengthe*, etc., all but Gg read of
strengthe and of lustynesse.

But dide him al honōur and companye.
Of which this Pellēus hath grete envye,
Imagynynge that Jason myghtē be 1410
Enhaunced so, and put in suche degree,
With love of lordēs of his regioun,
That from his regne he may be put adoun.

And in his witte a-nyghte compassed he
How Jason myghtē beste destroyed be,
Withoutē sclaunder of his compassēmente.
And at the laste he tooke avysēmente,
To senden him into some fer contre,
There as this Jason may destroyed be.
This was his witte, al made he to Jason
Grete chere of love and of affeccioun, 1421
For dredē lest his lordēs hyt espyde.

So felle hyt, so as famē renneth wide,
Ther was suche tidynge overal, and suche
los,

That in an ile that callēd was Colcos,
Beyonde Troyē, estwarde in the see,
That ther a ram was that men myghtē see,
That had a flees of gold, that shoon so
bryghte,

That no-wher was ther suche another
sighte,

But hit was kept alway with a dragoun,—
And many other mervels up and down ;
And with two boles maked al of bras,
That spitten fire ; and muchē thinge ther
was. 1433

But this was eke the talē, nathēlees,
That who-so woldē wynnē thilkē flees,
Hemostē both—or hehyt wynnē myghte—
With the bolēs and the dragoun fyghte ;
And kyng Oētes lorde was of that ile.
This Pellēus bethoughte upon this wile,
That he his newewe Jason wolde enhortē
To saylen to that londe, him to disporte ;
And seyde, ‘ Newewe, if hyt myghtē be,
That suchē worshippe myghtē fallē the,
That thou this famous tresor myghtē
wynne,

And bryngyn hit my regyoun withinne,
It were to me grette plesaunce and honōre ;
Thanne were I holde to quytē thy laboure,
And al the cost I wol my-selfē make ;

1413. *may*, Gg and Arch. Seld. *mighte*

1418. *To*, F⁵ *That to*.

1425. *Colcos*, Colchis.

1438. *Oetes*, Aetes.

And chese what folke that thou wylte with
the take. 1449

Let see nowe, darstow taken this viage?'

Jason was yonge, and lusty of corage,
And undertooke to doon this ilke emprise.
Anon Argus his shippes gan devyse.

With Jason wente the stronge Hercules,
And many another that he with him ches.
But who-so axeth who is with him gon,
Lét him redé 'Argonauticon,'
For he wol telle a talé longe ynoughc.
Philotetes anon the sayle up droughe,
Whan that the wynde was good, and gan
him hye 1460

Out of his contree calléd Tessalye.
So longe he sayléd in the salté see,
Til in the ile of Lemnon arryvéd he.
Al be this not rehersed of Guydo,
Yet seyth Ovyde in his Epistles so;
And of this ilc lady was, and queene,
The fairé yonge Ysiphilé, the shene,
That whilom Thoas doughter was, the
kyngc.

Ysiphylé was goon in hire pleyngc,
And romynge on the clyvès by the see.
Under a brake anon espiede she 1471
Where that the shippe of Jason gan arrive.
Of hire goodnesse adoun she sendeth blyve,
To weten, if that any straungé wyghte
With tempest thider were y-blowa-nyghte,
To doon hem socour, as was hir usaunce
To forthren every wyghte, and don
plesaunce
Of very bountee, and of curteysie.

This messagere adoun him gan to hye,
And founde Jason and Ercules also,
That in a cogge to londé were y-go, 1481
Hem to refresshen, and to take the eyr.
The morwényng atempree was and fair,
And in his way this messenger hem mette;
Ful cunnynghely these lordés two he grette,
And did his message, askynge hem anon
If they were broken, or ought wo-begon,

1449. *that*, all but Gg and Arch. Seld. om.

1453. *Argus*, the builder of the Argo.

1457. *rede*, Trin.² *go rede*.

1457. *Argonauticon*, i.e. the imitation of Apollonius Rhodius by Valerius Flaccus.

1459. *Philotetes*, Philoctetes.

1460. *that*, all but Gg and Trin.² om.

1463. *Lemnon*, Lemnos.

1472. *that . . . of*, F⁴ *lay . . . that*.

Or haddé nede of lodesmen or vitayle;
For of socoure they shuldé no thinge sayle,
For it was outrély the quenés wille. 1490

Jason answerdè mekely and stille;
'My lady,' quod he, 'thanke I hertely
Of hir goodnesse; us nedeth trewely
Nothing as now, but that we wery be,
And comé for to pley out of the see,
Til that the wynde be better in oure weyc.

This lady rometh by the clyffe to pleye
With hire meynce, endélonge the stronde,
And fyndeth this Jason and thyse other
stonde 1499
In spekyngc of this thingc, as I yow tolde.

This Ercules and Jason gan beholde
How that the queene it was, and faire hir
grette,

Anonryght as they with this lady mette.
And she tooke hede, and knew by hire
manere,

By hire array, by wordés, and by chere,
That hit were gentil men of grete degree.
And to the castel with hir ledeth she
These straungé folke, and doth hem grete
honour; 1508

And axeth heni of travaylle and labour
That they han suffréd in the salté see;
So that withynne a day, or two or three,
She knew by folke that in his shippés be,
That hyt was Jason, full of renomee,
And Ercules, that hadde the greté los,
That soughten the áventurés of Colcos.
And did hem honour moré than before,
And with hem deléd ever lenger the more,
For they ben worthy folke, withouten les.
And, namely, she spake most with Ercules;
To him hir herté bare, he shuldé be 1520
Sad, wise, and trewe, of wordés avyse,
Withouten any other affeccioun
Of love, or evyl ymaginacioun.

This Ercules hath so this Jason preysed,
That to the sonne he hath hym up areysed,
That halfe so trewe a man ther nas of love
Under the cope of hevене, that is above;
And he was wyse, hardy, secré, and ryche;

1490. Fairfax, Tanner, and Bodley MSS. omit this line.

1512. *folke*, so Gg and Arch. Seld.; F⁶ *the folke* or *folkes*.

1523. *cry*, all but Gg *any other*.

1525. *areysed*, all but Gg *reysed*.

Of these thre poyntés there nas noon hym
liche.

Of fredome passéd he, and lustihede, 1530
Allé tho that lyven, or ben dede.

Therto so grete a gentil-man was he,
And of Tessaie likly kyng to be.
Ther nas no lakke, but that he was agaste
To love, and for to speké shaméfasté ;
He haddé lever himselfe to mordre and dye,
Than that men shulde a lover him espye.
'As wolde almychty God that I hadde yive
My bloode and flessch, so that I myghte lyve,
With the nonés that he hadde oughe-where
a wife 1540

For his estaat ! for suche a lusty lyfe
She sholdé ledé with this lusty knyghte !
And all this was compassed on the nyghte
Betwix him Jason, and this Ercules.
Of these two here was a shrewde les,
To come to house upon an innocent !—
For, to bedote this queene was here assent.

This Jason is as coy as is a mayde ;
He loketh pitously, but noght he sayde,
But freely yaf he to hir counselleres 1550
Yiftés grete, and to hire officeres,
As God wolde that I leyser had and tyme,
By processe al his wowyng for to ryme !
But in this house if any fals lover be,
Ryght as himselfe now doth, ryght so
did he,

With feynynge, and with every sotil dede.
Ye gete no more of me, but ye wol rede
The original that telleth al the cas.

The somme is this, that Jason weddid was
Unto this queene, and toke of hire sub-
stance 1560

What-so him lysté unto his purveyaunce ;
And upon hir begat he children two,
And drough his saylle, and saugh hir
never mo.

A letter senté she to hym certeyn,
Which were to longe to written and to
seyn ;

1538. *almychty*, Arch. Seld. only ; probably the scribe's insertion to mend the line.

1540. *With the nones*, on condition.

1547. *assent*, F⁴ and Ar. Seld. *intent*.

1554. *in this house*. The phrase points to the poem being read aloud, possibly at court.

1558. *The original*, Ovid, *Iher.* Ep. vi., from

hich he translates closely in ll. 1564 sq.

1559. *somme*, F⁴ *sothe* ; Ar. Seld. *text*.

And him repreveth of his grete untrouthe,
And prayeth him on hir to have some
routhe.

And of his children two, she sayede him
this :

That they be lyke of allé thinge, y-wis,
To Jason, save they couthe nat begile. 1570
And prayede God, or hit were longé
while,

That she that had his herte y-rafte hir fro
Most fynden him to hir untrewé also :
And that she mosté both hir childrens spille,
And allé tho that suffreth hym his wille.
And trewe to Jason was she al hir lyf,
And ever kept hir chaste, as for his wyf ;
Ne never hadde she joyé at hir herte,
But dyéd for his love of sorwés smerte.

To Colcos comen is this duke Jasoun,
That is of love devourer and dragoun, 1581
As mater appetiteth forme alwey,
Or as a wellle that weré botomles,
Ryght so kan fals Jason have no pes,
For to desiren, thurgh his appetite,
To doon with gentil wymmen his delyte ;
This is his luste, and his felicity.

Jason is romed forth to the cite,
That whylom clepéd was Jaconitos, 1590
That was the maister toun of al Colcos,
And hath y-tolde the cause of his comynge
Unto Oetes, of that contree kyng ;
Prayinge him that he moste doon his assay
To gete the fiese of golde, if that he may.
Of which the kyng assentith to his bone,
And doth him honour as hyt was to done,
So ferforth, that his doghtre and his eyre,
Medea, which that was so wise and feyre,
That feyrer saugh ther never man with ye,
He made hire doon to Jason companye
At mete, and sitté by him in the hall. 1602

Now was Jason a semely man withalle,
And like a lorde, and had a grete renoun,
And of his loke as rial as a lyoun,
And goodly of his speche, and famulere,
And koude of love al crafte and arte
plenere

1582. *mater*, F *nature*. Chaucer takes his philosophy from Guido.

1590. *Jaconitos* (F⁴ *Jasonicos*), Jaconites in Colchis.

1597. *was*, F⁴ *is*.

Withouté boke, with everyche observaunce.
And as fortune hir oughte a foule mes-
chaunce.

She wex enamouréd upon this man. 1610

'Jason,' quod she, 'for oght I se or kan,
As of this thinge the whiche ye ben aboute,
Ye, han your-selfe y-put in mochê doute;
For who-so wol this aventure acheve,
He may nat wele asterten, as I leve,
Withouten dethe, but I his helpê be.
But nathêlesse, hit is my wille,' quod she,
'To furtheren yow, so that ye shal nat dye,
But turnê sounde home to youre Tessalye.'

'My ryghtê lady,' quod thys Jason,
'tho, 1620

That ye han of my dethe, or of my wo,
Any rewarde, and doon me this honour,
I wote wel that my myght, ne my labour,
May not deserve hit in my lyvê day;
God thankê yow, ther I ne kan nor may.
Youre man am I, and lowly yow beseche
To ben my helpe, withouté morê speche;
But certês for my dethe shal I not spare.'

Tho gan this Médea to him declare

The peril of this case, fro poynt to poynt
Of his bataylê, and in what disjoynt 1631
He motê stonde; of whiche no créature,
Save only she, ne myght his lyfê assure.
And shortely, to the poynt ryght for to go,
They ben accorded ful betwex hem two,
That Jason shal hir wedde, as trewê knyght,
And terme y-sette to comê soone at nyght
Unto hir chambré, and make there his
othe

Upon the goddys, that he for leve ne lothe
Ne shulde hire never falsen, nyght ne day,
To ben hir husbonde while he lyvê may,
Asshe that from his dethe hym savêd there.

And here-upon at nyght they mete yfere,
And doth his othe, and goth with hir to
bedde, 1644

And on the morwê upwarde he him
spedde,

For she hath taught him how he shal not
faile

The flese to wynne, and stynten his batayle;
And savêd him his lyfê and his honour,

1608. with, Gg and.

1640. Add.2 begins here.

1643. Omitted in F3.

And gat a name ryght as a conquerour,
Ryght thurgh the sleighte of hir en-
chauntément. 1650

Now hath Jason the fleese, and home
is went

With Médea, and tresourês ful grete
woon;

But unwiste of hir fader she is goon
To Tessalye, with duke Jason hir leefe,
That afterwarde hath broght hir to
myscheffe.

For as a traytour he is from hire go,
And with hir leftê yongê children two,
And falsly hath betrayêd hir, allas!
And ever in love a chefe traytour he was;
And wedded yet the thriddê wife anon,
That was the doghtre of the kynge Creon.

This is the mede of lovyng and
guerdoun, 1662

That Médea receyvêd of Jasoun
Ryght for hir trouthe, and for hir kyndê-
nesse,

That loved hym beter thane hir-selfe, I
gesse;

And left hir fadir and hire heritage.
And of Jason this is the vassalage,
That in his dayes nas never noon y-founde
So fals a lover goynge on the grounde.

And therefore in her letter thus she sayde,
First of his falsnesse whan she hym up-
brayde. 1671

'Why lykêd me thy yelow heere to see,
More than the boundês of myn honeste?
Why lykêd me thy youthc and thy faire-
nesse,

And of thy tonge the infinite gracious-
nesse?

O, haddst thou in thy conquest ded y-be,
Ful mykel untrouthê had ther dyed with
the!'

Wel kan Ovyde hir letter in verse endyte,
Which were as now to longe for me to
write.

*Explicit Legenda Ysiphile et Medee,
Martirum*

1659. a chefe traytour, Gg a thef and tray-
tour; Trin. a thyef traytour; Add.2 traytour
and theffe.

1670. in her letter, Ovid, *Her. Ep.* xii. 10. 11.

Incipit Legenda Lucretie, Rome, Martiris

Now mote I sayne the exilynge of kynges
Of Romé, for here horrible doynges; 1681
Óf the lasté kynge Tarquinius
As sayth Ovyde, and Titus Lyvius.
But for that causé telle I nat this story,
But for to preyse, and drawn to memory
The verray wife, the verray trewe Lucesse,
That for hir wifhode, and hir stedfast-
nesse,

Nat only that these payens hir comende,
But he that y-clepéd is in oure legende 1689
The grete Austyne bath grete compassoun
Of this Lucesse that starf at Romé toun.
And in what wise I wol but shortly trete,
And of this thyng I touché but the grete.

Whan Ardea besegéd was aboute
With Romaines, that ful sterné were and
stoute,
Ful longé lay the sege, and lytel wroghte,
So that they were halfe ydel, as hem
thoghte.

And in his pley Tarquinius the yonge
Can for to jape, for he was lyghte of tonge,
And saydè that hyt was an ydel lyfe, 1700
No man dide ther no moré than his wife.
'And lat us speke of wivés that is best;
Preise every man his owné, as him lest,
And with oure spechê let us ease our herte.'

A knyght, that highté Colatyne, up
steré,

And saydè thus: 'Nay, for hit is no nede
To trowen on the worde, but on the dede.
I have a wife,' quod he, 'that as I trowe
Is holden good of al that ever hir knowe.
Go we to Rome, to nyght, and we shul se.'
Tarquinius answerde, 'That lyketh me.'

To Romé be they come, and faste
hem dighte 1712

To Colatynés house, and down they lyghte,
Tarquinius, and eke this Colatyne.

The housbonde knewe the estres wel
and fyne,

And ful prevely into the house they goon,

1683. *Ovyde*, Ovid, *Fasti* ii. 685, 721-852.

1683. *Lyvius*, Livius, i. 57-58.

1684. *telle*, Gg ne *telle*.

1686. *trewe*, Gg only; rest om.

1701. *no* (2), Gg only; rest om.

1716. *ful*, Trin.² om.

For at the gaté porter was there noon:
And at the chambre doré they abyde.

This noble wyfe sat by hir beddys syde
Disshevele, for no malice she ne thoghte,
And softé wolfe saith our boke that
she wroghte, 1721

To kepen hir fro slouthe and ydilnesse;
And bad hirservantes doon hir besynesse;
And axeth hem, 'What tydynges heren ye?
How sayne men of the sege? how
shal it be?

God wolde the wallés weren falle adoun!
Myn housbonde is to longe out of this toun,
For which the dredé doth me so to smerte;
Ryght as a swerde hyt styngeth to myn
herte, 1729

Whan I thanke on the sege, or of that place.
God save my lorde, I pray him for his grace!'

And therewithal ful tendirly she wepe,
And of hir werke she toke no moré kepe,
But mekely she let hire eyen falle,
And thilké semblant sat hir wel withalle.
And eke the teerés ful of honeste
Embelysshéd hire wifely chastitee.

Hire countenance is to her herté digne,
For they acorden in dede and signe.
And with that worde hir husbonde
Colatyne, 1740

Orshe of him was ware, comestertyngynne,
And saydè, 'Drede the noght, for
I am here!'

And she anon up roos, with blysfyl chere,
And kyssed hym, as of wyvés is the wone.

Tarquinius, this prowde kyngés sone,
Conceyvéd hath hir beaute and hir chere,
Hire yelow heer, hir shap, and hire manere,
Hir hewe, hir wordés that she hath
compleyned,

And by no craft hir beaute was not feyned;
And kaughté to this lady suche desire,
That in his herté brent as any fire 1751

So wodely that his witté was forgeten,
For wel thoghte he shuldé nat be geten.
And ay the more that he was in dispaire,

1721. *our boke*, Thynne (wrongly) *Livi*; Gg om. Perhaps Chaucer wrote *Ovyde* (cp. *Fasti* ii. 741-742).

1730. *the sege*, Trin.⁴; F⁴ *these, this*; Gg corrupt.

1736. *honeste*, F² *hevyte*; Tan. and Th. *hevy-nesse*. Ovid has 'lacrimæ cecidere pudicæ.'

1753. Gg *For he wote wel she wolde*.

The more he covetyth, and thought hir faire ;
His blyndē lust was al his covetyngē.

On morwē, whan the brid began to syngē,
Unto the sege he cometh ful pryvely,
And by himselſe he walketh sobrecly,
The ymage of hir recordyng alwey newe :
'Thus lay hir heer, and thus fressh
was hir hewe ;

1761

Thus sate, thus spake, thus spanne,
this was hir chere ;

Thus faire she was, and thys was hir
manere.'

Al this conceyte his herte hath new y-take,
And as the see, with tempeste al to-shake,
That after, whan the storme is al ago,
Yet wol the watir quappe a day or two,
Ryght so, thogh that hir formē were absent,
The plesaunce of hir formē was present.

But nathēles, nat plesaunce, but delyte,
Or an unryghtful talent with dispite,—
'For mawgree hir, she shal my lemman
be :

Happe helpeth hardy man alway,' quod
he,

'What endē that I make, hit shal be so !'
And gyrt hym with his swerde, and
gan to go,

And forth he rit til he to Rome is come,
And al alone his way than hath he nome
Unto the hous of Colatyne ful ryght.

Doun was the sonne, and day hath
lost his lyght,

1779

And inne he come, unto a prevy halke,
And in the nyght ful thefely gan he stalke,
Whan every wyght was to his restē broght,
Neno wyght had of tresoun suche a thoght.
Whether by wyndow, or by other gynne,
With swerde y-drawe, shortly he cometh
ynne

There as she lay, thys noble wyfe Lucesse,
And as she woke, hir bed she feltē presse.
'What best is that,' quod she, 'that
weyeth thus ?'

'I am the kyngēs sone, Tarquinius,'
Quod he, 'but and thow crye, or
noysē make,

1790

Or if thou any creature awake,
Be thilkē God that formede man on lyve,
This swerd thurghout thyn hertē shal
I ryve.'

And therwithal unto hir throte he sterte,
And sette the swerde al sharpe unto
hir herte.

No worde she spake, she hath no
myght therto ;

What shal she sayne? hir wytte is al ago !
Ryght as a wolfe that fynt a lomb alone,
To whom shal she compleyne or
makē mone?

What ! shal she fyghtē with an hardy
knyghte?

1800

Wel wotē men a woman hath no myghte.
What ! shal she crye, or how shal she asterte
That hath hir by the throte, with swerde
at herte?

She axeth grace, and seyde al that she kan.
'Ne wolt thou nat?' quod tho this
cruelle man,

'As wisly Jupiter my soule save,
As I shal in the stable slee thy knave,
And lay him in thy bed, and lowdē crye,
That I the fynde in suche avowtrye ;
And thus thou shalt be ded, and also lese
Thy namē, for thou shalt non othir chese.'

Thise Romaynes wyfēs loveden so
hir name

1812

At thilkē tyme, and dredden so the shame,
That, what for fere of sklaundre, and
drede of dethe,

She lost attonēs bothē wytte and brethe ;
And in a swowgh she lay, and woxe so ded,
Men myghten smyten of hir armē or hed,
She feleth nothinge, neither foule ne feyre.

Tarquinius, thou art a kyngēs eyre, 1819
And sholdest, as by lynage and by ryght,
Doon as a lorde and as a verray knyght ;
Why hastow doon dispite to chevalrye?
Why hastow doon thys lady vylanye?
Allas, of the thys was a vilenous dede !

But now to the purpose ; in the
story I rede

Whan he was goon and this myschaunce
is falle.

Thys lady sent aftir hir frendēs alle,
Fādler, moder, housbonde, alle y-fere,

1798. *fynt a lomb*, F⁴ (many of whose bad readings are passed over) here have *seyneth a love*!

1805. *tho*, Trin. only ; Gg⁴ *he*, rest om.

1815. *attonēs bothe* Gg only ; rest *both attonēs*.

1821. *verray*, Gg *worthi*.

And al dysshevelee with hir heeré clere,
In habyte suche as wymmen usede tho
Unto the buryinge of hir frendés go, 1831
She sytte in hallé with a sorowful syghte.
Hir frendés axen what hir aylen myghte,
And who was dede, and she sytte
aye wepynge.

A worde for shame ne may she forthe
out brynge,

Ne upon hem she dursté nat beholde,
But atté laste of Tarquyn she hem tolde
Thisrewful case, andal thys thing horryble.

The wo to telle hyt were an impossible
That she and al hir frendés made attones.
Al haddé folkés hertys ben of stones, 1841
Hyt myght have makéd hem upon hir rewe,
Hire herté was so wyfely and so trewe.
She sayde that for hir gylt, ne for hir blame,
Hir housbonde shulde nat have the
foulé name,

That noldé she nat suffren by no wey.
And they answerd alle upon hir fey,
That they foryaf hyt hyr, for hyt was ryght;
Hyt was no gilt; hit lay not in hir myght,
And seyden hire ensamples many oon.
But al for noght, for thus she seyde anon:
'Be as be may,' quod she, 'of foryifynge;
I wol not have no foryift for nothinge.'
But pryvely she kaughté forth a knyfe,
And therwithal she rafté hir-selfe hir lyfe;
And as she felle adoun she kaste hire lóke,
And of hir clothés yet she hedé toke;
For in hir fallynge yet she haddé care,
Lest that hir fete or suché thyngé lay bare,
So wel she lovédé clennessé, and eke
trouthe! 1860

Of hir had al the toun of Romé routhé,
And Brutus by hir chasté bloode hath sworné,
That Tarquyn shulde y-banysshed be
therfore,

And al his kynne; and let the peple calle,
And openly the tale he tolde hem alle;
And openly let cary her on a bere
Thurgh al the toun, that men may
see and here 1867

The horryblé dede of hir oppressyoun.
Ne never was ther kynge in Romé toun
Syn thilké day; and she was holden there
A seynt, and ever hir day y-halwéd dere,

Asin hire lawe. And thus endeth Lucesse
The noble wyfe, as Titus beryth wittnesse.

I telle hyt, for she was of love so trewe,
Ne in hir wille she chaungédé for no newe;
And for the stable herté, sadde and kynde,
That in these wymmen men may al
day fynde;

Ther as they kaste hire herté, there
it dwelleth.

For wel I wot that Criste himselfé telleth,
That in Israel, as wyde as is the londe,
Nat so grete feythe in al that londe
he fonde, 1881

As in a woman; and this is no lye.
And as for men, loketh which tyrannye
They doon al day,—assay hem who-
so lyste,

The trewest is ful brotil for to triste.

*Explicit Legenda Lucrecie, Rome,
Martiris*

Incipit Legenda Adriane de Athenes

Juge infernal Mynos, of Creté king,
Now cometh thy lotte, now comestow
on the ryngé!

Nat only for thy sake writen is this story,
But for to clepe ageyn unto memory 1890
(Of Theseus, the grete untrewé of love,
For which the goddis of the heven above
Ben wrothe, and wreche han také for
thy synne.

Be rede for shame! now I thy lyfe begynne.

Mynos, that was the myghty kynge
of Ciete,

That wan an hundred citees stronge
and grete,

To scole hath sent his sone Androgeus
To Athenes, of the which hyt happeth thus,
That he was slayne, lernynge philosophie,
Ryght in that citee, nat but for envye.

The greté Mynos, of the whiche I speke,
His sonés dethe is comé for to wreke,—
Alcathoe besegeth harde and longe; 1902
But nathéles, the wallés be so stronge,

1872. *As in hire lawe*, in their religion.

1881. *Nat*, Trin. 2; rest *that*.

1881. *he*, all but Add. *he ne*.

1902. *Alcathoe*, the name of the western
acropolis of Megara.

And Nysus, that was kyng of that citee,
So chyvalrous, that lytel dredeth he ;
Of Mynos or his oste toke he no cure.
Til, on a day, befel an aventure,
That Nisus doghtre stode upon the walle,
And of the segé sawe the maner alle. ¹⁹⁰⁹
So happede hyt that at a skarmysshynge,
She caste hir hert upon Mynos the kyng,
For his beaute, and for his chevalerye,
So soré, that she wendé for to dye.

And, shortly of this processe for to pace,
She madé Mynos wynnen thilké place,
So that the citee was al at his wille,
To saven whom hym lyst, or ellés spille.
But wikkidly he quytte her kyndénesse,
And lethir drenchen in sorowe and distresse,
Nere that the goddys had of hir pite ; ¹⁹²⁰
But that tale were to longe as now for me.

Athénés wanne this kyng Mynos also,
As Alcathoe and other tounés mo ;
And this theeffect, that Mynos hath sodryven
Hem of Athénés, that they mote hym yiven
Fro yere to yere hir owene children dere
For to be slayne, as ye shal after here.

Thys Mynos hath a monstre, a wikked
beste,

That was so cruelle that, withoute areste,
Whan that a man was broght in his
presence, ¹⁹³⁰
He wolde hymete ; ther helpeth no defence.
And every thriddé yere, withouten doute,
They casten lotte, and as hyt came aboute
On ryche, on pore, he most his soné take,
And of his childe he mosté present make
To Mynos, to save him or to spille,
Or lat his best devoure him at his wille.
And this hath Mynos doon right in dyspite ;
To wreke his sone was sette all his delyte,
And maken hem of Athénés his thralle
Fro yere to yere, while that he lyven shalle ;
And home he saileth whan this toun is
wonne ¹⁹⁴²

This wikked custome is so longe y-ronne,
Til that of Athénés kyng Egeús
Moste senden his owne soné Theséus,
Sith that the lotte is fallen hym upon,
To be devoured, for grace is ther non.

^{1936.} Trin.² botch this line by reading *unto* for
to (1), Arch. Seld. by *for* to instead of to (2), Gg
has *To Thesens* for *To Mynos*.

And forth is lad thys woful yongé knyght
Unto the court of kyng Mynos full ryght,
And in a prison fetred faste is he, ¹⁹⁵⁰
Til thilké tyme he shulde y-freten be.

Wel maystow wepe, O woful Theseus,
That art a kyngcsone, and dampned thus !
Me thynketh this, that thou were depe
y-holde

To whom that savéde the fro carés colde !
And now, if any woman helpé the,
Wel oughtestow hir servant for to be,
And ben hir trewé lover yere by yere !
But now to come agayn to my matere.
The tour, ther as this Theseus is throwe,
Doun in the bothome derke, and wonder
lowe, ¹⁹⁶¹

Was joynynge in the walle to a foreyne,
And hyt was longynge to the doghtren
tweyne

Of kyng Mynos, that in hire chambres grete
Dwelten above, toward the maystré strete
Of Athenés, in joy and in solace.

Wot I not how, hyt happédé parcase,
As Theseus compleynéd hym by nyghte,
The kyngés doghter Adriane that hyghte,
And eke hir suster Phedra, herden alle
His compleynt, as they stoden on the walle,
And lokéden upon the bryghté mone ;
Hem listé nat to go to beddéd sone. ¹⁹⁷³
And of his wo they hadde compassoun ;
A kyngés sone to be in swiche prisoun,
And be devoured, thoughte hem grete
pitee.

Than Adriane spake to hir suster free,
And seyde, ' Phedra, levé suster dere,
This woful lordés sone may ye not here,
How pitously compleyneth he his kynne,
And eke his pore estate that he is ynne,
And giltéles ? now certés hit is routhe !
And if ye wol assenté, by my trouthe,
He shal be holpen, how so that we do.'

Phedra answerde, ' Y-wys, me is as wo
For him, as ever I was for any man ;

^{1949.} court, F⁴ contrée.

^{1949.} ful ryght, F⁴ ful of myght.

^{1964.} kyng, Arch. Seld. only, probably an
emendation. Here again Gg has *Thesens* for
Mynos.

^{1966.} *Athenes*, probably Chaucer's own slip ;
T² in *mocheill myrthe*.

^{1973.} sone, F⁴ Trin.² so sone.

^{1986.} Add. stops here.

And to his helpe the bestè rede I kan,
Is, that we doon the gayler prively
To come and speké with us hastily,
And doon this woful man with him to come;
For if he may the monstre overcome, 1991
Than were he quyte; ther is noon other
bote!

Lat us wel taste him at hys herte-rote,
That if so be that he a wepne have,
Wher that he dar, his lyfe to kepe or save,
Figheten with this fende and him defende.
For in the prison, ther he shal descende,
Ye wote wel that the best is in a place
That nys not derke, and hath roume and
eke space

To welde an axe, or swerde, or staffe, or
knyffe. 2000

So that, me thenketh, he shuldè save his
lyffe;

If that he be a man, he shal do so.

'And we shal make him ballès eke also
Of wexe and towe, that, whan he gapeth
faste,

Into the bestès throte he shal hem caste,
To sleke his hunger, and encombre his teeth.
And ryght anon whan that Thesús seeth
The beste achokéd, he shal on hym lepe
To sleen hym or they comen more to-hepe.
This wepen shal the gayler, or that tyde,
Ful prively within the prisoun hyde: 2011
And for the house is crynkled to and fro,
And hath so queynté weyès for to go,
For it is shapen as the mase is wrought,
Therto have I a remedy in my thoght,
That by a clewe of twyne, as he hath gon,
The samè way he may returne anon,
Folwyng alway the threde, as he hath
come.

And whan that he this beste hathe over-
come, 2019

Thanne may he fleen away out of this drede,
And eke the gayler may he wyth him lede,
And him avaunce at home in his contree,
Syn that so grete a lordès sone is he.
Thys is my rede, if that ye dar hyt take;
What shulde I lenger sermoun of hyt make?

1995. So Gg; F *wher that hys lyfe he dar kepe*;
rest vary.

1999. Gg *and hath bothe roum and space*.

2020. *drede*, F⁴ *sted*.

2024. *ye*, so Trin.² and Th.; rest *he*.

The gayler cometh, and with hym
Theseus;

Whan thesè thyngès ben acordèd thus,
Adoun sytte Theseus upon his knee, 2028
'The ryghtè lady of my lyfe,' quod he,
'I sorwful man, y-dampned to the deth,
Froyow, whiles that me lasteth lyf or breth,
I wol not twynne afir this aventure.
But in youre servise thus I wol endure;
That asa wrecche unknowe I wol yow serve
For evermore, til that myn hertè sterve.
Forsake I wol at home myn herytage,
And, as I sayde, ben of youre courtè a page,
If that ye vouchésafe that in this place,
Ye grauntè me to have so gret a grace,
That I may have not but my mete and
drinke; 2040

And for my sustenaunce yet wol I swynke,
Ryght as yow lystè; that Mynos, ne no
wyght,

Syn that he sawe me never with eyen syght,
Ne no man ellès shal me konne espye,
So slyly and so wel I shal me gye,
And me so wel disfigure, and so lowe,
That in this worlde ther shal no man me
knowe,

To han my lyfe, and to have the presence
Of yow, that doon to me this excellence.
And to my fader shal I sendè here 2050
This worthy man that is now your gaylere,
And him to-guerdone that he shal wel bee
Oon of the grettest men of my contree.
And if I durstè sayne, my lady bryght,
I am a kyngès sone and eke a knyght,
As woldè God, if that hyt myghtè bee,
Ye weren in my contree allè threë,
And I with yow, to bere yow companye.
Than shulde ye seen if that I therof lye.

'And if I profre yow in lowe manere
To ben youre page and serven yow ryght
here, 2061

But I yow serve as lowly in that place,
I prey to Mars to yevè me suche grace,
That shamès deth on me ther motè falle,
And dethe and povertè to my frendès alle,
And that my spirite be nyghtè motè go
After my dethe, and walkè to and fro,

2048. *to have the*, so Add.2; F⁴ *to have*; Gg³
for to have.

2051. *now*, only Gg.

Thát I mote of traytoure have a name,
For which my spirite goth to do meshame !
And if I ever clayme other degre, ²⁰⁷⁰
But of ye vouchésafe to yeve hyt me,
As I have seyde, of shamés deth I deye !
And mercy, lady ! I kan nat ellés seye.'

A semely knyght was Theseus to see,
And yongé, but of twenty yere and thre.
But whoso hadde y-seen his contenance,
He wolde have wepte for routhe of his
penaunce ;

For which this Adriane in this manere
Answerde hym to his profre and to his chere.
'A kyngés sone, and eke a knyght,' quod
she, ²⁰⁸⁰

'To ben my servant in so lowe degre,
God shelde hit, for the shame of wymmen
alle,

And lene me never suche a casc befallé !
But sende yow grace and sleight of herte
also

Yow to defende and knyghtly sleen your fo !
And lene hereafter that I may yow fynde
To me and to my suster here so kynde,
That I repenté not to yeve yow lyfe !

'Yet wer hyt better that I were your wife,
Syn that ye ben as gentil borne as I, ²⁰⁹⁰
And have a realme nat but fasté by,
Then that I suffrede yow gylltes to sterue,
Or that I lete you as a pagé serve ;
Ilyt is no profre, as unto youre kynrede.
But what is that man wol not do for drede ?
And to my suster, syn that hyt is so,
That she mote goon with me, if that I goo,
Or ellés suffre deth as wel as I,
That ye unto your sone, as trewely, ²⁰⁹⁹
Doon hir be wedded at your home comynge.
This is the final ende of al this thyngé ;
Ye, swere hit here, upon al that may be
sworne !'

'Yee, lady myn,' quod he, 'or ellés torne
Mote I be with the Minotawre to morowe !
And have here-of myn herté-bloode to
borowe,

If that ye wol ! If I hadde knyfe or spere,
I wolde hit laten out, and theron swere,
For then at erst I wote ye wol me leve.

^{2092.} *yow gylltes, F⁴ your gentillesse.*

^{2094.} *no profre, etc., i.e. no proffer suitable to
your birth ; F⁴ not profet.*

By Mars, that is the chefe of my beleve,
So that I myghté lyven, and nat fayle
To morowe for to achévè my batayle, ²¹¹¹
I noldé never fro this placé flee,
Til that ye shulde the verray prefé see.
For now, if that the sothe I shal yow saye,
I have y-lovéd yow ful many a daye,
Thogh ye ne wiste it nat, in my contree,
And aldermoste desiréd yow to see
Of any erthely lyvyng creature.

Upon my trouthe I swere, and yow assure,
These seven yere I have your servant bee.
Now have I yow, and also have ye mee,
My deré herte, of Athenés duchesse !'

This lady smyleth at his stedfastnesse,
And at his hertely wordys, and his chere,
And to hir suster sayde in this manere :
'Al softely now, suster myn,' quod she,
'Now be we duchesses, both I and ye,
And sykered to the regals of Athenes,
And both herafter lykly to be queenes,
And savéd fro his deth a kyngés sone,
As ever of gentil wymen is the wone ²¹³¹
To save a gentilman, enforthe hir myght,
In honest cause, and namely in his ryght.
Me thinketh no wyght ought us here-of
blame,

Ne beren us therfore an evel name.'

And shortly of this matere for to make,
This Theseus of hir hath leve y-take,
And every poynt was performed in dede,
As ye have in this covenant herdemerede ;
His wepne, his clew, his thing that I
have sayde, ²¹⁴⁰

Was by the gayler in the house y-layde,
Ther as this Mynatour hath his dwellyng,
Ryght fasté by the dorre at his entrynge ;
And Theseus is ladde unto his deth ;
And forthe unto this Mynataure he geth,
And by the techynge of thys Adriane,
He overcome thys beste and was his bane,
And oute he cometh by the clewe agayne
Ful prively, when he thys beste hath
slayne ;

And by the gayler gotten hath a barge, ²¹⁵⁰
And of his wivés tresure gan it charge,
And tok his wif, and eke hir suster free,
And eke the gayler, and wyth hem alle
three

Is stole away out of the londe by nighte,

And to the contree of Ennopye hym dyghte,
There as he had a frende of his knowynge.
There festen they, there dauncen they
and synge,

And in his armès hath thys Adriane,
That of the beste hath kepte him from
his bane. 2159

And gate him there a newé barge anoon,
And of his countre-folke a ful grete woon,
And taketh his leve, and homewardc
sayleth hee ;

And in an yle, amyddle the wildè see,
There as ther dwelleth creaturè noon
Save wildè bestes, and that ful many oon,
He made his shippe a-londè for to sette,
And in that ile halfe a day he lette,
And sayde that on the londe he moste
him reste.

His maryners han don ryght as hym
leste ;

And, for to tellè shortly in thys cas, 2170
Whanne Adriane his wyfe aslepè was,
For that hir suster fairer was than she,
He taketh hir in his honde, and forthgooth
he

To shyppe, and as a traytour stale his way,
While that thys Adriane aslepè lay,
And to his contree-warde he sayleth
blyve,—

A twenty devel way the wynde him
dryve !—

And fonde his fader drenchèd in the see.
Me lyste no more to speke of hym, *pardec* !
These falsè lovers, poysoun be hir bane !

But I wol turne ageyne to Adryane,
That is with slepe for werynesse y-take ;
Ful sorwfully hir hertè may awake. 2183
Allas, for the myn hertè hath pitee !
Ryght in the dawynynge awaketh she,
And gropeth in the bed, and fonde ryght
noght.

‘Allas,’ quod she, ‘that ever I was
wroght :

I am betrayéd,’ and hir heer to-rente,
And to the strondè barefote faste she wente,
And cryede, ‘Theseus ! myn hertè swete !

2155. *Ennopye*, ‘Ænopia, another name for Ægina’ (Skeat); Gilman suggests Enope in Messenia.

2184. *pitee*, Gg now *pitee*; Trin.² *gret pitee*.

2188. *hir heer*, Gg *at hire her*.

Where be ye, that I may not wyth yow
mete ? 2191

And myghtè thus with bestes ben y-slayne.’

The holoweroches answerde hir agayne.
No man she sawe, and yet shynède the
mone,

And hye upon a rokke she wentè sone,
And saw his bargè saylynge in the see.
Colde waxe hir herte, and ryght thus
saydè she :

‘Meker than ye fynde I the bestès
wilde !’—

Hadde he not synnè that hir thus be-
gyldè !—

She cried, ‘O turne agayne for routhe
and synne, 2200

Thy bargè hath not al his meyny ynne.’
Iiir kerche on a pole up stykede she,
Ascauncè that he shulde hyt wel y-see,
And hym remembre that she was behynde,
And turne agayne, and on the stronde
hir fynde.

But al for noght ; his wey he is i-noon,
And doun she felle a-swowne upon a stoon ;
And up she ryste, and kyssed in al hir care
The steppès of his fete, there he hath fare,
And to hir bedde ryght thus she speketh
tho : 2210

‘Thow bedd,’ quoth she, ‘that hast
receyvèd two,

Thow shalt answer of two and not of oon,
Where is thy gretter parte away i-noon ?
Allas, whereshal I wreched wyght become ?
For though so be that shyp or boot here
come,

Home to my contree dar I not for drede ;
I kan my-selfè in this case not rede.’

What shulde I tellè more hir compleyn-
ynge ?

Hyt is so longe hyt were an hevy thyng.
In hyr Epistil Naso telleth alle ; 2220
But shortly to the endè tel I shalle.
The goddys have hir holpen for pitee,
And in the sygne of Taurus men may see
The stonès of hir corowne shynè clere ;
I wol no morè speke of thys matere.

2215. *ship or boot*, Trin.; Arch. Seld. and Add.² *any lote*; Gg *boot here ne*; F⁴ *bote noon here*. Ovid :

Finge, dari comitesque mihi, ventosque, ratomque.

But thus this falsè lover kan begyle
His trewe love, the devel quyte hym his
while !

Explicit Legenda Adriane de Athenes

Incipit Legenda Philomene

Thow yiver of the formès, that hast
wroght

The fairè worlde, and bare hit in thy thought
Eternally or thow thy werke beganne, 2230
Why madest thou unto the sklaunder of
manne,

Or—al be that hyt was not thy doynge,
As for that fyne to makè suche a thyng,—
Why suffrest thou that Terèus was bore,
That is in love so fals and so forswore,
That fro thys worlde up to the firstè hevene
Corrumpeth, whan that folke his namè
nevene ?

And as to me, so grisly was his dede,
That whan that I this foulè story rede,
Myn eyen wexen foule and sore also ; 2240
Yet laste the venym of so longe ago,
That it infecteth hym that wolde beholde
The story of Terèus, of which I tolde.

Of Trasè was he lorde, and kynne to
Marte,
The cruelle god that stante with bloddy
darte,

And wedded hadde he, with a blisful chere,
King Pandyonès fairè doghter dere,
That hyghtè Proygne, floure of hir contree ;
Thogh Juno lyst nat at the festè bee,
Ne Ymeneus, that god of weddyng is. 2250
But at the festè redy ben, y-wys,
The Furies thre, withal hire mortel bronde,
Theowle al nyght about the balkès wonde,
That prophete is of wo and of myschaunce.
This revel, ful of songe, and ful of daunce,
Lasteth a fourtènyght or lytel lasse.
But shortly of this story for to passe,—
For I am wery of hym for to telle,—
Fyve yere his wyfe and he togedir dwelle ;
Til on a day she gan so sorè longe 2260
To seen hirsuster, that shesaugh not longe,

2228. *yiver of the formes*, 'Deus dator formarum', Bodley gloss.

2256. *Lasteth*, Arch. Seld. *Lestith*; rest *Laste*.

That for desirè she nystè what to seye,
But to hir husbonde gan she for to preye
For Goddys love, that she moste onès gon
Hir suster for to seen, and come anon.
Or ellès, but she mostè to hyr wende,
She preyde hym that he wolde afir hir
sende.

And thys was day be day al hir prayere,
With al humblesse of wyfehode, worde
and chere. 2269

This Terèus let make his shippès yare,
And into Grece hymselfe is forthe y-fare,
Unto his fader in lawe, and gan hym preye,
To vouchèsafe that for a moneth or tweye,
That Philomene, his wyf's suster, myghte
On Proigne his wyfe but onès have a syghte ;
'And she shal come to yow agayne anon,
Myselfe with hyr, I wil bothe come and
gon,

And as myn hertès lyfe I wol hir kepe.'
Thys oldè Pandèon, thys kyng, gan
wepe

For tendernesse of hertè for to leve 2280
His doghtre gon, and for to yive hir leve ;
Of al thys worlde he lovede nothinge so ;
But at the lastè leve hath she to go.

For Philomene with saltè terès eke
Gan of hir fader graccè to beseke,
To seen hir sustre that she loveth so,
And hym embraceth with hir armès two.
And ther-with-alle so yonge and faire was
she, 2288

That whan that Terèus saugh hir beaute,
And of array that ther nas noon hir lyche
(And yet of beaute was she two so ryche),
He caste his fiery hert upon hir so,
That he wol have hir, how-so that hyt go,
And with his wilès kneled and so preyde,
Til at the lastè Pandèon thus seyde :

'Now, sone,' quod he, 'that arte to
me so dere,

I the betake my yongè doghtre here,
That bereth the key of al myn hertès lyfe.
And gretè wel my doghter and thy wyfe,
And yeve hir leve sometymè for to pleye,
That she may seen me onès or I deye.'
And sothely he hath made him rychè feste,
And to his folke, the moste and eke the leste,

2286. *she loveth*, F⁴ *hir longeth*.

2291. *beaute*, F² *bounte*.

That with him come ; and yaf him yeftes
grete,

And him conveyeth thurgh the maistir strete
Of Athenés, and to the sec him broghte,
And turneth home ; no malyce he ne
thoghte.

The ores pulleth forthe the vessel faste,
And into Trace arryveth at the lafte ;
And up into a forest he hir ledde, ²³¹⁰
And to a cavé pryvely hym spedde,
And in this derké cavé, yif hir leste,
Or lesté noght, he bad hir for to reste ;
Of which hir hert agrose, and seyde thus :
'Where is my suster, brother Teréus ?'

And therewithal she wepté tendirly,
And quoke for feré, pale and pitously,
Ryghte as the lambe that of the wolfe is
byten,

Or as the colver that of the egle is smyten,
And is out of his clawes forthe escaped,
Yét hyt is aferded and awhaped ²³²¹

Lest hit be hent eftsonés : so sate she.
But utterly hyt may none other be,
By forcé hath this traytour done a dede,
That he hath refte hir of hir maydenhede
Maugree hir hede, by strengthe and by
his myght.

Lo, here a dede of men, and that aryght !
She crieth 'Suster !' with ful loudé stevene,
And 'Fader dere !' and 'Helpe me,
God in hevene !'

Al helpeth nat. And yet this falsé thefe
Hath doon thys lady yet a more myschefe,
For ferdé lest she sholde his shamé crye,
And done hym openly a vilanye, ²³³³
And with his swerde hire tonge of ker-
veth he,

And in a castel made hir for to be
Ful privly in prison evermore,
And kept hir to his usage and to his store,
So that she myghte hym nevermore asterte.

O sely Philomene, wo is in thyn herte !
God wreke the, and sendé the thy bone !
Now is hyt tyme I make an endé sone.

This Teréus is to his wyfe y-come,
And in his armes hath his wyfe y-nome,

2329. and (2), om. F⁵.

2332. *For ferdé* Gg³ *For fere*.

2338. F³ om. and insert the spurious line *Huge*
ben thy sorwes and wonder smerte after 2339.

And pitously he wepe, and shoke his hede,
And swore hire that he fonde hir
suster dede ;

For whiche thesely Proigne hath suche wo,
That nyghe hire sorwful herté brake a-two.
And thus in terés lat I Proigne dwelle,
And of hir suster forthe I wol yow telle.

This woful lady y-learnéd had in yowthe,
So that she werken and enbrowden
kowthe, ²³⁵¹

And weven in hire stole the radevore,
As hyt of wymmen hath ben y-wovéd yore.
And, shortly for to seyn, she hath hir fille
Of mete and drynke, and clothyng at
hire wille,

And kouthe eke rede and wel ynogh endyte,
But with a penné kouthe she nat write ;
But letteres kan she wevé to and fro.

So that by that the yere was al ago,
She haddé woven in a stames large, ²³⁶⁰
How she was broght from Athenes
in a barge,

And in a cavé how that she was broght,
And al the thinge that Tercus hath wrought,
She wave hyt wel, and wrote the
story above,

How she was servél for hir suster love.
And to a knave a ryng she yaf anoon,
And prayéd hym by signés for to goon
Unto the quene, and beren hir that clothe ;
And by signés swor hym many an othe,
She shulde hym yevé what she geten
myghte. ²³⁷⁰

Thys knave anon unto the queene
hym dyghte,

And toke hit hir, and al the maner tolde.
And whanne that Proigne hath this
thing beholde,

No worde she spake, for sorwe and
eke for rage,

But feynéd hyr to goon on pilgrymage
To Bachus temple. And in a lytel stounde
Hire dombé suster syttyng hath she founde
Wépyng in the castel, hir-self allone.
Allas, the wo, the comyleynt, and the
mone

2352. *hire*, F⁵ om.

2353. *ben y-wovéd*, so Arch. Seld. ; rest *be-wovéd*,
be wovéd.

2369. *signes*, F⁴ *signe*.

2369. *hym*, Gg only ; Trin. *she* ; rest om.

That Proigne upon hir dombè suster
maketh ! 2380

In armès everych of hem other taketh ;
And thus I lat hem in her sorwè dwelle.

The remenant is no chargè for to telle,
For this is al and some,—thus was
she served,

That never harm agyltè ne deservede
Unto thys cruelle man, that she of wyste.
Ye may be war of men, yif that yow lyste.
For al be that he wol not for his shame
Dóon as Tereus, to lese his name, 2389
Ne serve yow as a morderere or a knave,
Ful lytel whilè shul ye trewe hym have,—
That wol I seyne, al were he now
my brother,—

But hit so be that he may have non other.

Explicit Legenda Philomele

Incipit Legenda Phillis

By preve, as wel as by auctorite,
That wikked frute cometh of a wikked tree,
That may ye fynde, if that hyt liketh yow.

But for thys ende I speke thys as now,
To tellè yow of falsè Demophon.

In love a falsè herde I never non,
But if hit were hys fader Thesus ; 2400
God, for his graccè, fro suche om kepe us !
Thus thesè wymen prayen that hit here ;
Now to theffect turne I of my matere.

Distroyèd is of Troyè the citee ;
This Demophon come saylyng in the see
Towarde Athénis to his paleys large.
With hym come many a shippe and
many a barge

Ful of folke, of whiche ful many on
Is wounded sore, and seke, and wo begon,
And they han at a segè longe y-layne.

Byhynde him come a wynde and eke
a rayne, 2411

That shofe so sore his saylle ne myghtè
stonde,

Hym werè lever than al the worlde a-londe,
So hunteth hym the tempest to and fro !
So derke hyt was, he kouthè no-wher go,

2388. *his*, Gg only.

2400. *if*, F^b om.

2408. *folke*, Gg *his folk*.

And with a wawè brosten was his stere.
His shippe was rent so lowe, in suche
manere,

That carpentere ne koude hit nat amende.

The see by nyght as any torchè brende
For wode, and posseth hym now up now
doun ; 2420

Til Neptune bath of hym compassyoun,
And Thetis, Chorus, Triton, and they alle,
And maden him upon a londe to falle,
Wherof that Phillis lady was and quene,
Lycurgus doghtre, fayrer on to sene
Than is the floure ageyn the bryghtè sonne.

Unneth is Demophoon to londe
y-wonne,

Waykeandekewery, and his folke forpyned
Of werynesse, and also enfanyned, 2429
And to the dethe he was almoste y-dreven.
His wisè folke to counseyle han hym even,
To sken helpe and socour of the quene,
And loken what his graccè myghtè benc,
And maken in that londe some chevis-
saunce,

To kepen hym fro wo and fro myschaunce.
For seke he was, and almoste at the dethe ;
Unnethè myght he speke, or drawè brethe ;
And lyeth in Rhodopeya hym for to reste.

Whan he may walke, hym thoght hit
was the beste

Unto the court to saken for socoure. 2440
Men knewe hym welc and diden hym
honoure ;

For at Athénis duke and lorde was he,
As Thesús his fader hath y-be,
That in his tymè was of grete renoun,
No man so grete in al his regioun ;
And lyke his fader of face and of stature,
And fals of love ; hyt came hym of nature,
As doth the fox Renarde, the foxes sone ;
Of kynde he koude his oldè fadrès wone

2420. *now up now down*, F⁴ *up and down*.

2422. *Chorus*. So Thynne (the MSS. read *Thorus*), probably a misunderstanding of 'Et senior Glauci chorus' in *Æn.* v. 823-825, where Thetis, Triton 'and they all' ('exercitus omnis') are mentioned. See Skeat's note and Bech in *Anglia*, vol. v.

2435. *To*, F⁴ *And*.

2438. *Rhodopeya*, a mountain in Thrace.

2440. *court*, F⁴ *contriv*.

2441. *diden*, so Gg (*dedyn*) ; F⁴ *dyd* ; Trin.² *did him gret* ; Add.² *hym they dede*.

2442. *at*, Gg *of*.

Withouté lore, as kana drakéswymme 2450
Whan hit is kaught and caried to the
brymme.

Thys honourable quenè doth him chere,
Hir lyketh wel his porte and his manere.
But for I am agroteyd here beforne,
To write of hem that ben in love forsworne
And eke to hasté me in my Legende,
Which to performé, God me gracé sende ;
Therefore I passé shortly in thys wyse.

Ye have wel herde of Theséus devise,
In the betraysyng of faire Adriane, 2460
That of hir pitee kepte hym fro his bane.
At shorté wordés, ryght so Demophon,
The samé way, the samé path hath gon,
That did his falsé fader Theséus.

For unto Phillis hath he sworen thus,
To wedden hir, and hir his trouthe plyghte,
And pikéd of hyr al the good he myghte,
Whan he was hole and sounde, and had
his reste,
And doth with Phillis what-so that him
leste,

As wel kouthe I, gif that me lesté so, 2470
Téllen al his doynges, to and fro.

He sayde unto his contree moste he
sayle,

For ther he wolde hire weddyng apparaylle
As fille to hir honour and his also,
And openly he tok his levé tho,
And to hir swore he woldé not sojourne,
But in a moneth ageyn he wolde retourne.
And in that londe let make his ordynance,
As verray lorde, and toke the obeisaunce
Weland homely, and let his shippis dyghte,
And home he gooth the nexté wey he
myghte. 2481

For unto Phillis yet ne come he noght,
And that hath shes so harde and sorey-boght,
Allas, that as the stories us recorde,
She was hir owné dethe ryght with a corde,
Whanne that she segh that Demophon
her trayede.

But to hym firste she wrote, and faste hym
prayedé

He woldé come and hir delyver of peyne,

2459. *devise*, F³ *the nyse*; Thynne *the gyse*.

2480. *homely*, Tan. *humble*; Thynne *humbly*.

2480. *let*, Gg only; rest om.

2482. *For*, Trin. *But*.

As I rehersé shal oo worde or tweyne.
Me lysté nat vouch-safe on him to swynke,
Ne spend on hym a penné ful of ynke, 2491
For fals in love was he, ryght as his syre;
The devel set hire soulés both a-fire!
But of the letter of Phillis wol I wryte
A worde or tweyne, althogh hit be but lyte.

'Thyn hostesse,' quod she, 'O thou
Demophon,

Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon,
Of Rhodopey, upon yow mot compleyne,
Over the termé sette betwix us tweyne,
That ye ne holden forwarde, as ye seyde.
Your anker, which ye in oure haven leyde,
Hyght us that ye wolde comen out of doute,
Or that the moné went onés aboute;
But tymés foure the moné hath hid hir face
Syn thylké day ye wenté fro this place;
And fouré tymés lyghte the worlde ageyn.
But for al that, yet I shal soothly seyn,
Yet hath the streme of Sithon nat i-broght
From Athenés the shippe; yet cometh
hit noght.

And if that ye the termé rekné wolde, 2510
As I or other trewé lovère sholde,
I pleyne nat, God wot! beforne my day.'
But al hir letter writen I ne may
By ordre, for hit were to me a charge;
Hir letter was ryght longe, and therto large.
Buthere and there in ryme I have hyt layde,
There as me thoughté that she hath wel
sayde.

She seyde, 'Thy sayllés cometh nat
ageyn,

Ne to the woder there nys no fey certeyn;
But I wote why ye comé nat,' quod she;
'For I was of my love to yow so fre. 2521
And of the goddys that ye han forswore,
If hire vengeauncé fal on yow therfore,
Ye be nat suffisaunt to bere the peyne.
To muché trustel I, wel may I pleyne,
Upon youre lynage and youre fairé tonge,
And on youre terés falsély out-wronge.
How kouthe ye wepé so be crafte?' quod
she;

2491. *Ne spend*, F¹ *Dispenden*.

2496. *thou*, Trin. and Aich. Seld. only.

2508. *Sithon*, the name of the father of Phillis,
the King of Thrace.

2511. *lovère*, F¹ *lovers*.

2523. *If*, F¹ *That*.

'Máy there suché teres i-feynede be ?
Now certes gif ye wolde have in memorye,
Hyt oughté be to yow but lytel glorie, 2531
To have a sely maydè thus betrayed !
To God,' quod she, 'prey I, and ofte
have prayed,
That hyt be nowe the gretest prise of alle,
And moste honour that ever yow shal
befalle.

And when thyn olde auncetres peynted be,
In which men may her worthynessé se,
Then pray I God, thow peynted be also,
That folke may reden, for-by as they go, —
"Lo, this is he, that with his flaterye
Betrayéd hath, and doon hir vilanye, 2541
That was his trewé love in thoghte and
dede."

But sothely of oo poynt yet may they
rede,
That ye ben lyke youre fader, as in this ;
For hy begiléd Adriane, y-wis,
With suche an arte, and suché soteltec,
As thou thy-selven hast begiled me.
As in that poynt, althogh hit be nat feire,
Thou folwest hym certeyn, and art his
cyre.

But syn thus synfully ye me begile, 2550
My body mote ye seen, within a while,
Ryght in the havene of Athenés fletynge,
Withouten sepulture and buryinge,
Though ye ben harder then is any stone.'

And whan this letter was forthé sent
anone,
And knew how brotel and how fals he was,
She for dispeyre forlode hir-self, alas !
Suche sorowe hath she, for she beset hireso !
Be war, ye wymmen, of youre sotile fo !
Syns yet this day men may ensample se,
And, as in love, trusteth no man but me.

Explicit Legenda Phillis

Incipit Legenda Ypermystre

In Grece whilom weren brethren two
Of which that oon was calléd Danao, 2563
That many a sone hath of his body wonne,
As suché falsé lovers ofté konne.

Among his sonés allé there was oon,
That aldermoste he loved of everychon.

And whan this childe was borne, this Danao
Shope hym a name, and calléd hym Lyno.

That other brother calléd was Egiste,
That was in love as fals as ever hym lysté.
And many a doghtre gat he in his lyfe ;
Of which he gat upon his ryghté wife 2573
A doghter dere, and did hir for to calle
Ypermystra, yongest of hem alle.
The whiché childe, of hir natyvite,
To allé goodé thewés borne was she,
As lykéd to the goddes, or she was borne,
That of the shefe she shuldé be the corne.

The Wirdes, that we clepen Destanye,
Hath shapen hir, that she moste nedés be
Pitousé, saddé, wise, and trewe as stele.
And to this woman hyt acordeth wele ;
For though that Venus yaf hir grete beaute,
With Jupiter compounéd so was she,
That consciencé, trouthe, and drede of
shame,

And of hir wyfchode for to kepe hir name,
This thoghte hire was felicité as here.
And redé Mars was that tyme of the yere
So feble, that his malice is him rafte ; 2590
Represséd hath Venus his cruelle crafte ;
And with Venús, and other oppressoun
Of houses, Mars his venym is adoun,
That Ypermystra dare not handel a knyfe
In malyce, thogh she shuldé lese hir lyfe.

But nathéles, as heven gan tho turne,
To badde aspectes hath she of Saturne,
That made hir for to dyen in prisoun,
As I shal after maké mencion.

To Danao and Egistes also, 2600
Al thogh so be that they were brethren
two,

For thilké tyme nas sparéd no lynage,
Hyt lyketh hem to maken mariage
Betwixé Ypermostre and hym Lyno,
And casten suche a day hyt shal be so,
And ful accorded was hit wittirly.

The array is wrought, the tyme is fasté by,
And thus Lyno hath of his fadres brother
The doghter wedded, and eché of hem
hath other.

2582. *and*, Trin.² only.

2592. *And with*, Gg⁴ *That* (Thynne *And*)
what with.

2598. *dyen*, MSS. *dy*, *dye*.

2599. *As*, F⁴ *And*.

2601. *Al*, F⁵ *And*.

The torches brennen, and the lampès
bryghte, 2610

The sacrifices ben ful reddy dyght,
Thence out of the fire reketh sote,
The flour, the lefe, is rent up by the rote,
To maken garlandes and coronés hye;
Ful is the place of sounde of mynstraleye,
Of songes amorous of mariage,
As thilké tymé was the pleyne usage.
And this was in the paleys of Egiste,
That in his house was lorde, ryght as hym
lyste.

And thus that day they driven to an ende;
The frendès taken leve, and home they
wende; 2621

The nyght is comen, the bride shal go to
bedde.

Egiste to his chambre fast hym spedde,
And prively he let his doghter calle,
Whanne that the hous was voyded of hem
alle.

He lokéd on his doghter with glad chere,
And to hir spak as ye shal after here.

‘My ryghté doghtér, tresour of myn
herte,

Syn firste that day that shapen was my
sherte, 2629

Or by the fatale sustren hadde my dome,
So ny myn herté never thinge me come
As thou, myn Ypermystra, doughter dere!
Take hedé what thy fader seyth the here,
And wirke after thy wiser ever mo.

For alderfirsté, doghter, I love the so
That al the worlde to me nys half so lefe,
Ne I noldé redé the to thy myschefe,
For al the good under the coldé moone;
And what I meene, hyt shal be seyde
ryght soone, 2639

With protestacioun, as seyn these wyse,
That, but thou do as I shal the devyse,
Thou shalt be ded,—by hym that al hath
wrought!

At shorté wordés thou ne scapest nought
Out of my paleys or that thou be dede,
But thou consente and werke aftir my rede;
Take this to the for ful conclusioun.’

2632. *myn*, Gg only; Trin.² have *my* before
doughter.

2633. *what*, Gg *what I*.

2637. *I noldé*, F⁴ *noldé*; Trin. *woldé*; Add.²
woldé I.

This Ypermystra caste hir eyen doun,
And quoke as doth the lefe of aspé grene;
Ded wex hir hewe, and lyke an ashetosene;
And seyde, ‘Lorde and fader, al youre wille,
After my myght, God wote I shal fulfille,
So hit to me be no confusioun.’ 2652

‘Inyl,’ quod he, ‘have noon excepcioun;
And out he kaughte a knyfe as rasour kene.
‘Hyde this,’ quod he, ‘that hyt be not
i-sene,

And whan thyn housbonde is to beddè go,
While that he slepeth kut his throte atwo;
For in my dremés hyt is warnéd me,
How that my newew shal my bané be,
But which I not; wherfore I wol be siker.
Gif thou say nay, we two shal have a byker,
As I have seyde, by him that I have sworne!’

This Ypermystre hath nygh hire wytte
forlorne, 2663

And, for to passen harmlesse of that place,
She graunted hym; ther was noon other
grace.

And therewithal a costrel taketh he
And seyde, ‘Hereof a draught, or two, or
thre,

Yif hym to drynké, whan he gooth to reste,
And he shal slepe as long as ever the leste;
The narcotikes and opies ben so stronge.
And go thy way, lest that hym thynke to
longe.’ 2671

Oute cometh the bride, and with ful
sobre chere,
As is of maidenés ofté the manere,
To chambre is broght with revel and with
songe.

And shortly, leste this talé be to longe,
This Lyno and she beth i-broght to bedde,
And every wight out at the dore hym
spedde.

The nyght is wasted and he felle aslepe;
Ful tenderly begynneth she to wepe;
She riste hir up, and dredefully she quaketh,
As doth the braunché that Zepherus
shaketh, 2681

2649. *an*, F⁴ *as*.

2666. *he*, F⁴ add *tho*, omitting *or thre* in next
line.

2676. Trin. mends this line by reading *beth sone*
for *beth*, but Trin. and Arch. Seld. have *Danao*
for *Lino*, and this metre-saving slip may be
Chaucer’s own.

And hussht were alle in Argone that citee.
As colde as eny froste now wexeth she,
For pite by the herte hir streyneth so,
And drede of dethe doth hir so mochê wo,
That thriës doun she fil in swich a were,
Sheryst hir up and stakereth here and there,
And on hir handës fastë loketh she.
'Allas, and shal myn handës bloody be?
I am a mayde, and as by my nature, ²⁶⁹⁰
And by my semblant, and by my vesture,
Myn handës ben nat shapen for a knyfe,
As for to revê no man fro his lyfe!
What devel have I with the knyfe to do?
And shal I have my throtê korve a-two?
Than shal I blede, alas, and me be-shende!
And nedës-coste thys thing mot have an
ende;

Or he or I mot nedës lese oure lyfe.
Now certës, quod she, 'syn I am his wyfe,
And hathe my feythe, yet is hyt bet for me
For to be ded in wyfely honeste, ²⁷⁰¹
Than be a traytour lyvyng in my shame.
Be as be may, for erneste or for game,
He shal awake and ryse and go his way
Out at this goter, or that hyt be day.'

And wepte ful tendirly upon his face,
And in hir armës gan hym to embrace,
And hym she roggeth and awaketh softe,
And at the wyndow lepe he fro the lofte,
Whan she hath warnêd hym and doon
hym bote. ²⁷¹⁰

This Lyno swyftë was and lyght of fote,
And from his wif he rannc a ful goode pas.
This sely womman ys so wayke, alas!
And helpes, so that er that she fer wente
Her crewel fader did her for to hente,
Allas! Lyno, why art thou so unkynde?
Why ne haddist thou remembred in thy
mynde

And taken hir and ledde hir forthe with
the?

For when she sawe that goon away was he,
And that she mightë not so fastë go, ²⁷²⁰
Ne folowen hym she sat hir doun ryght tho,
Til she was caught and fetered in prysoun.
'This tale is seyle for this conclusioun.

^{2712.} *his wif he, F³ hir.*

^{2723.} At this point Chaucer, after showing
many signs of tiredness, seems to have abandoned
the *Legend* altogether.

LATER MINOR POEMS

TO ROSEMOUNDE

A BALADE

MADAME, ye ben of al beauté [the] shryne
As fer as cerclêd is the mappemoune,
For as the cristal glorious ye shyne
And lykê ruby ben your chekês rounde.
Therwith ye ben so mery and so jocounde
That at a revel whan that I see you daunce,
It is an oynement unto my wounde,
Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

For though I wepe of terês ful a tyne, ⁹
Yet may that wo myn hertë nat confounde;
Your seemly voys that ye so smal out-twyne
Maketh my thoght in joye and blis
habounde.

So curteisly I go, with lovê bounde,
That to myself I sey, in my penaunce,

^{1.} MS. Rawl. Poet. 163 omits *the*.

^{11.} MS. reads *seny*; and *synall* (i.e. *final*)
for *small*, according to Skeat.

Suffyseth me to love you Rosemounde,
Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

Nas never pyk walwêd in galauntyn
As I in love am walwêd and y-wounde,
For which ful ofte I of my-self dyvyne
That I am trewê Tristram the secounde, ²⁰
My love may not refreyd be nor afounde;
I brenne ay in an amorous plesaunce.
Do what you lyst, I wyl your thral be
founde

Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

TREGENTIL.

CHAUCER.

THE FORMER AGE

(ÆTAS PRIMA)

A BLISFUL lyf, a paisible and a swete,
Ledden the peplës in the former age;

They helde hem paied of fruitès that they
ete,

Whiche that the feldès yave hem by usage,
They ne werè nat for-pampred with out-
rage.

Unknowen was the quern and eek themelle,
They eten mast, hawès, and swych pounage,
And dronken water of the coldè welle.

Yit nas the ground nat wounded with
the plough,
But corn up-sprong, unsowe of mannès
hond,¹⁰
The which they gnodde and eete nat half
y-nough ;

No man yit knew the forwès of his lond ;
No man the fyr out of the flynt yit fonde ;
Unkorven and ungrobbèd lay the vyne ;
No man yit in the mortar spices grond
To clarrè, ne to sause of galentyne.

No mader welde, or wood no litèstere
Neknew ; the flees was of his former hewe ;
No flesh ne wyste offence of egge or spere ;
No coyn ne knew man which was fals or
trewe ;²⁰

Noshipyit karf the wawès grene and blewe ;
No marchaunt yit ne fette outlandissh ware ;
No trompès for the werrès folk ne knewe,
Ne towrès heye and wallès rounde or square.

What sholde it han avaylèd to werreye ?
Ther lay no profit, ther was no richesse ;
But cursèd was the tyme, I dar wel seye,
That men first dide hir swety besynesse
To grobbe up metal lurkyng in darknesse,
And in the ryverès fyrst gemmès soghte ;
Allas ! than sprong up al the cursèdnesse
Of covetyse that fyrst our sorwè broughte !

Thise tyraunts putte hem gladly nat in
pres
No wyldnesse ne no busshès for to wynne.
Ther póverte is, as seith Diogenes,
Ther as vitale is eek so skars and thinne,
That noght but mast or apples is ther-inne ;
But ther as baggès been and fat vitale
Ther wol they gon and sparè for no synne
With al hir ost the cyte forto asayle. 40

3. Both MSS. read *the fruites*.

34. H reads *places wyldnesse*; Hh *place of wyldnesse*.

Yit were no paleis chaumbrès, ne non
halles ;

In cavès and [in] wodès softe and swete,
Slepten this blissèd folk withowtè walles,
On gras or leves in parfit joye and quiète ;
No down of fetherès, ne no blechèd shete
Was kid to hem, but in seurtee they slepte.
Hir hertès were al oon withoutè galles,
Everich of hem his feith to other kepte.

Unforgèd was the hauberke and the
plate ;
The lambish peple, voydèd of alle vyce, so
Haddèn no fantasyè to debate,
But ech of hem wolde other wel cheryce ;
No pridè, non envye, non avaryce,
No lord, no taylage by no tyranye,
Humblese, and pes, good feith, the
emperice,

Yit was nat Jupiter the likerous,
That first was fader of delicacye,
Come in this world, ne Nembrot desyrous
To reynen had nat maad his tourès hye. 60
Allas ! allas ! now may men wepe and
crye !

For in our dayès nis but covetyse,
[And] dowblennesse, and tresoun, and
envey,
Poysoun, manslaughter, and mordre in
sondry wyse.

FORTUNE

Balades de visage sanz Peinture

1.—LE PLEINTIF COUNTRE FORTUNE

THIS wrecchèd worldès transmutacioun,
As welc or wo, now povre and now honour,
Withouten ordre or wys discrecioun
Governèd is by Fortunès errour ;
But natheles the lak of hir favour

42. Both omit *in* before *wodes*.

44. *quiete* is slurred so as to be practically monosyllabic or dissyllabic if the final vowel is pronounced. Cp. *B. of D.* l. 330 *Medea*.

56. This line is wanting in the MSS.

59. *Nembrot*, Nimrod.

63. Both omit first *And*.

Ne may not don me singen, though I dye.
'J'ay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour':
 For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye.

Yit is me left the light of my resoun
 To knowen frend fro fo in thy mirour. 10
 So muche hath yit thy whirlyng up and doun
 Y-taught me for to knowen in an hour.
 But trewely, no force of thy reddour
 To him that over him-self hath the maystrye
 My suffisauncé shal be my socour:
 For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye.

O Socrates, thou stedfast champioun,
 She never mighté be thy tormentour;
 Thou never dreeddest hir oppressioun
 Ne in hir cheré founde thou no savour. 20
 Thou knewe wel the deccit of hir colour
 And that hir mosté worshipec is to lye.
 I know hir eek a fals dissimulour:
 For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye!

II.—LA RESPONSE DE FORTUNE AU PLEINTIF

No man is wrecched, but him-self it wene
 And he that hath him-self hath suffisaunce.
 Why seystow than I am to thee so kene
 That hast thy-self out of my governaunce?
 Sey thus: 'Graunt mercy of thyn habound-
 aunce
 That thou hast lent or this.' Why wol
 thou stryve? 30
 What wostow yit how I thee wol avaunce?
 And eek thou hast thy besté frend alyve!

I have thee taught divisioun bi-twene
 Frend of effect, and frend of countenaunce;
 Thee nedeth nat the galle of noon hyéne,
 That cureth yen derke fro hir penaunce;
 Now seestow cleer, that were in ignoraunce.
 Yit halt thyn ancre, and yit thou mayst
 arryve

Ther bountee berth the keye of my sub-
 stance: 39
 And eek thou hast thy besté frend alyve!

11. All but I read *turnyng* for *whirlyng*.
 30. All but I read *Thou shalt not stryve*.

How many have I refuséd to sustene
 Sin I thee fostred have in thy plesaunce!
 Woltow than make a statute on thy quene
 That I shal been ay at thyn ordinaunce?
 Thou born art in my regne of variaunce,
 Aboute the wheel with other most thou
 dryve.

My lore is bet than wikke is thy grevaunce:
 And eek thou hast thy besté frend alyve!

III.—LA RESPONSE DU PLEINTIF COUNTRE FORTUNE

Thy lore I dampne, hit is adversitee.
 My frend maystow nat reven, blynd
 goddésse! 50
 That I thy frendés knowe, I thanke it thee.
 Tak hem agayn, lat hem go lye on presse!
 The negardye in kepyng hir richesse
 Prenostik is thou wolt hir tour assayle;
 Wikke appetyt comth ay before seknesse:
 In general, this reulé may nat fayle.

IV.—LA RESPONSE DE FORTUNE COUNTRE LE PLEINTIF

Thou pinchest at my mutabilitee,
 For I thee lente a drope of my richesse,
 And now me lyketh to withdrawé me.
 Why sholdestow my réaltee oppresse? 60
 The seemaycliche and flowen more or lesse;
 The welkne hath might to shyné, reyne
 or hayle;
 Right so mot I kythen my brotelnesse:
 In general, this reulé may nat fayle.

Lo, the executioun of the magestee
 That al purveyeth of his rightwysnesse
 That samé thyng 'Fortune' clepen ye,
 Ye blýnd bestés, ful of lewédnesse!
 The hevене hath propretee of sikernesse;
 This world hath ever restéles travayle; 70
 Thy lasté day is ende of myn intresse:
 In general, this reulé may nat fayle.

LENVOY DE FORTUNE

Princes, I prey you of your gentilesce
 Lat nat this man on me thus crye and
 pleyne,

51. Ii to for it.

And I shal quyte you your bisynesse 75
At my requeste, as thre of you or tweyne ;
And but you list releve him of his peyne,
Preyeth his besté frend, of his noblesse
That to som bettre estat he may atteyne.

TRUTH

BALADE DE BON CONSEYL

FLEE fro the prees, and dwelle with soth-
fastnesse
Suffice unto thy thyng though hit be smal ;
For hord hath hate and clymbyng tikel-
nesse,
Prees hath envye, and welc blent overal ;
Savour no more than thee bihovē shal ;
Werk wel thy-self, that other folk canst
rede,
And trouthe shall deliver, it is no drede.

Tempest thee noght al crokēd to redresse
In trust of hir that turneth as a bal :
Greet restē stant in litel besynesse ; 10
An eek be war to spornie ageyn an al ;
Stryve noght, as doth the crokke with the
wal.

Dauntē thy-self, that dauntest otherē dede,
And trouthe shall deliver, it is no drede.

That thee is sent, receyve in buxumnesse,
The wrastling for this worlde axeth a fal.
Her nis non hoom, her nis but wildernesse.
Forth, pilgrim, forth ! Forth, beste, out
of thy stal,

Know thy contree, look up, thank God
of al ;

Hold the hye wey, and lat thy gost thee
lede, 20

And trouthe shall deliver, it is no drede.

ENVOY

Therefore, thou vache, leve thyn old
wrecchednesse

Unto the world ; leve now to be thral ;
Crye him mercy, that of his hy goodness

76. Only in II. The meaning is doubtful.

20. *Hold the hye wey*, Harl. F₁ F₂ L. Cx. T₁ T₂
Seld. *Weyve thy lust* ; Kk *Reull thi self*.

23. *world* is dissyllabic as in O.E.

Made thee of noght, and in especial
Draw unto him, and pray in general
For thee, and eek for other, hevenlich
mede ;

And trouthe shall deliver, it is no drede.

Explicit le bon conseil de G. Chaucer.

GENTILESSE

MORAL BALADE OF CHAUCER

THE firstē stok and fader of gentilesse, —
What man that claymeth gentil for to be
Moste folwe his trace and alle his wittē
dresse

Vertu to sewe and vycē for to flee.

For unto vertu longeth dignitee,
And noght the revers, sauflly dar I deme,
Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

This firstē stok was ful of rightwysnesse,
Trewē of his word, sobre, pitous and free,
Clene of his goste and lovēd besynesse, 10
Ageynst the vyce of slouthē, in honestee ;
And but his heir love vertu, as dide he,
He nisnought gentil though he richē seme,
Al were he mitre, croune, or diademe.

Vycē may wel be heyr to old richesse,

But there may no man, as ye may wel
sec,

Bequethe his heyr his vertuous noblesse ;

That is appropred unto no degrec,

But to the firstē fader in magestee,
That maketh his heyr him that wol him
queme, 20

Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE

BALADE

SOM tyme this world was so stedfast and
stable

That mannēs word was obligacioun,
And now hit is so fals and deceivable
That word and deed, as in conclusioun,

1. A *The first fader and founder* ; H *fader*
and fynder ; Harl. *fader fynder*.

2. T II C Ha. *desireth* ; Add. *coucyteth*.

LENVOY DE CHAUCER A SCOGAN

Ben no-thing oon, for turned up so doun
Is al this world through mede and wilful-
nesse

That al is lost for lak of stedfastnesse.

What maketh this world to be so variable
But lust that folk have in dissensioun ?
For now adayes a man is holde unable 10
But if he can, by som collusioun,
Don his neighbour wrong or oppressioun.
What causeth this, but wilful wrecched-
nesse

That al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse ?

Trouthe is put doun, resoun is holden fable,
Vertu hath now no dominacioun,
Pitee cxyled, no wyght is merciåble.
Through covetyse is blent discrecioun ;
The world hath mad a permutacioun
Fro right to wrong, fro trouthe to fikel-
nesse, 20

That al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse.

LENVOY TO KING RICHARD

O prince, desire for to be honourable,
Cherish thy folk and hate extorcioun !
Suffre no thyng, that may be reprevable
To thyn estat, don in thy regioun.
Shew forth thy swerd of castigacioun,
Dred God, do law, love trouthe and
worthynesse,
And dryve thy folk ageyn to stedfastnesse.

Explicit.

LENVOY DE CHAUCER A SCOGAN

TO-BROKEN been the statutes hyc in
hevene,
That créat were eternally to dure,
Sith that I see the bryghté goddès sevene

5. Ct. F Harl. 7578 *Is no thing lyke*; Add. *Ar nothing like*.

10. Tr. Th. Ct. F Add. Harl. 7578 *For amonge us*; Bann. *Among us now*.

17. Harl. 7578 Ct. F *man for wyght*.

28. Harl. 7578 Ct. F Tr. Th. *And wed*.

Mowe wepe and wayle, and passioun
endure,

As may in erthe a mortale créature.

Allas ! fro whennés may this thing pro-
cede ?

Of whiche errour I deye almost for drede.

By worde eterne whilom was it y-shape,
That fro the fifté cerele, in no manére,
Ne myghte a drope of terés doun eschape.
But now so wepeth Venus in hir spere, 11
That with hir terés she wol drenche us
here.

Allas, Scogan ! this is for thyn offence !
Thou causeth this deluge of pestilence.

Hast thou not seyd in blasphemie of this
goddés,
Through pride, or through thy greté
rekelnesse,
Swich thing as in the lawe of love forbode
is ?

That, for thy lady saw nat thy distresse,
Therfor thou yave hir up at Michelmesse ?
Allas, Scogan ! of oldé folk ne yonge, 20
Was never erst Scogan blamed for his
tonge.

Thou drowe in scorn Cupide cek to
recorde
Of thilké rebel word that thou hast spoken,
For which he wol no lenger be thy lord.
And, Scogan, thogh his bowé be nat
broken,
He wol nat with his arwés been y-wroken
On thee, ne me, ne noon of our figure ;
We shul of him have neyther hurte ne cure.

Now certés, frend, I drede of thyn
unhappe,
Leste for thy gilte the wreche of love
procede 30
On alle hem that ben hore and rounde of
shape,
That ben so lykly folk in love to spede.
Than shul we for our labour han no mede ;
But wel I wot, thou wilt answee and seye,
' Loo, tholdé Grisellist to ryme and pleye !'

4. *wepe and wayle*. Probably a reference to the heavy rains and floods of 1393.

Nay, Scogan, say not so, for I mexcuse,
 God helpe me so ! in no ryme doutéless,
 Ne thynke I never of sleep to wake my
 muse, ³⁸
 That rusteth in my shethé stille in pees ;
 While I was yong I put hir forth in prees ;
 But al shal passén that men prose or ryme,
 Take every man his turne as for his tyme.

ENVOY

Scogan, that knelest at the stremés hede
 Of grace, of alle honour, and worthy-
 nesse !
 In thende of which streme I am dul as
 dede,
 Forgete in solitarie wilderness ;
 Yet, Scogan, thenke on Tullius kyndé-
 nesse ;
 Mynné thy frend ther it may fructifye,
 Far-wel, and lok thou never eft love defye.

THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS

I

THERE nys so hy comfort to my
 plesaunce,
 Whan that I am in any hevynesse,
 As for to have leyser of remembraunce
 Upon the manhod and the worthynesse,
 Upon the trouth and on the stedfastnesse
 Of him whos I am al, whil I may dure.
 Ther oghté blamé me no creature,
 For every wyght preiseth his gentillesse.

In him is bountee, wysdom, govern-
 aunce, ⁹
 Wel more then any mannés wyt can gesse ;
 For grace hath wold so ferforth him
 avaunce,
 That of knyghthode he is parfit richesse ;
 Honour honoureth him for his noblesse ;
 Therto so well hath forméd him Nature.
 That I am his for ever, I him assure,
 For every wyght preiseth his gentillesse.

And not-withstandyng al his suffisaunce
 His gentil herte is of so greet humbleesse

47. *Tullius kyndenesse*, a reference to M.
 Tullius Cicero's *De Amicitia*.

To me in word, in werk, in contenaunce,
 And me to serve is al his besynesse, ²⁰
 That I am set in verrey sikirnesse.
 Thus oghte I blessé wel myn aventure,
 Sith that him list me serven and honoure,
 For every wyght preiseth his gentillesse.

II

Now certés, Love, hit is right covénable,
 That men ful deré bye the noble thyng,
 As wake a-bedde, and fasten at the table,
 Wepying to laughe and singe in com-
 pleynyng,
 And doun to casté visage and lokyng, ²⁹
 Often to chaungén hewe and countenaunce,
 Pleyne in slepyng, and dremén at the
 daunce,
 Al the revers of any glad felyng.

Ialousyé be hangéd by a cable !
 She wolde al knowé through her espyng.
 Ther doth no wyght nothyng so resonable,
 That al nys harm in her ymagynyng.
 Thus dere abought is Love in his yevyng,
 Which ofte he yiveth withoutén ordyn-
 aunce,
 As sorw ynogh, and litel of plesaunce,
 Al the revers of any glad felyng. ⁴⁰

A litel tyme his yift is agréable,
 But ful encombérous is the usyng ;
 For subtil jalosy, the deceyvable,
 Ful often-tymé causeth destourbyng.
 Thus be we ever in drede and sufferyng ;
 In nouncerteyn we languisshe in penaunce,
 And han ful often many an harde mys-
 chaunce,
 Al the revers of any glad felyng.

III

But certés, Love, I sey not in such wyse,
 That for tescap out of your lace I mente,
 For I so longe have been in your servyse, ⁵¹
 That for to lete of, wol I never assente.
 No fors ! thogh jalousyé me tormente ;
 Sufficeth me to see him when I may ;
 And therfor certés to myn endyng-day,
 To love him best, ne shal I never repente.

31. *Granson plaindre en dormant* ; MSS
pleye.

LENVOY DE CHAUCER A BUKTON.

And certès, Love, whan I me wel avyse
On any estat that man may represente,
Then have ye makèd me, through your
franchise, 59
Chesè the beste that ever on erthè wente.
Now love wel, herte, and look thou never
stente,
And let the jelouse put it in assay,
That for no peynè wol I not sey nay;
To love him best, ne shal I never repente.

I Hertè, to thee hit oghte y-nogh suffyse
That Love so hy a gracè to thee sente
To chese the worthiest in allè wyse,
And most agreable unto myn entente.
Sechè no ferther, neyther way ne wente,
Sith I have suffisaunce unto my pay,-- 70
Thus wol I endè this compleynt or lay,
To love him beste ne shal I never repente.

LENVOY

Princess ! receyveth this Compleynt in
gree,
Unto your excellent benignitee,
Direct after my litel suffisaunce.
For eld, that in my spirit dulleth me,
Hath of endyting al the subtilte
Wel ny bereft out of my remembraunce;
And eek to me hit is a greet penaunce,
Syth rym in English hath swich scarsitee,
To folwè word by word the curiositee 81
Of Graunson, flour of hem that make
in Fraunce !

LENVOY DE CHAUCER A BUKTON

THE COUNSEL OF CHAUCER TOUCH-
ING MARIAGE, WHICH WAS SENT
TO BUKTON

MY maister Bukton, whan of Criste
our kyng
Was axèd, What is trouthe or sothfast-
nesse ?

82. Sir Oto de Graunson, a knight of Savoy,
received an annuity from Richard II. in 1393 for
services to the king.

He nat a word answerde to that axyng,
As who saith, 'No man is al trewe,' I
gesse.

And therfor, thogh I hightè to expresse
The sorwe and wo that is in mariage,
I dar not wryte of hit no wikkednesse,
Lest I my-self falle eft in swich dotage.

I wol nat seyn how that hit is the
cheyne
Of Sathanas, on which he gnaweth
ever ; 10
But I dar seyn, were he out of his
peyne,
As by his wille he wolde be boundè
never.
But thilkè dotèd fool that eft hath lever
Y-cheynèd be than out of prison crepe,
God lete him never fro his wo dissever,
Ne no man him bewaylè thogh he wepe !

But yit, lest thou do worsè, tak a wyf ;
Bet is to wedde than brenne in worsè
wyse,
But thou shalt have sorwe on thy flessch,
thy lyf,
And ben thy wyvès thral, as seyn these
wyse, 20
And if that holy writ may nat suffyse,
Experience shal thee techè, so may happe,
That thee were lever to be take in Fryse
Than eft to falle of weddyng in the trappe.

ENVOY

This litel writ, proverbès, or figure
I sendè you, tak kepe of hit, I rede :
Unwys is he that can no welc endure.
If thou be siker, put thee nat in drede.
The Wyf of Bathe I pray yow that ye
rede
Of this matèrè that we have on honde. 30
God grauntè you your lyf frely to lede
In fredom ; for ful hard is to be bonde.

Explicit.

23. *Fryse*. An expedition in which Englishmen
took part was launched against Friesland in 1396.
The Frieslanders refused to ransom their country-
men when captured, so no exchange was possible,
which gives force to Chaucer's line.

THE COMPLEYNT OF
CHAUCER TO HIS PURSE

To you, my purse, and to noon other wyght
Compleyne I, for ye be my lady dere !
I am so sory now that ye been light ;
For, certès, but ye make me hevy chere,
Me were as leef be leyd upon my bere,
For whiche unto your mercy thus I crye,—
Beth hevy ageyn, or ellès mot I dye !

Now voucheth sauf this day, or hit be
nyght, 8

That I of you the blisful soun may here,
Or see your colour lyk the sonnè bright,
That of yelownesse haddè never pere.

Ye be my lyf ! ye be myn hertès stère !
Queene of comfort and of good companye !
Beth hevy ageyn, or ellès mot I dye.

Now, purse, that be to me my lyvès light
And savcours, as down in this worlde
here,

Out of this toun help me throgh your
myght,

Syn that ye wole not been my tresorère ;
For I am shave as nye as is a frere. 19

19. *as is a*, Harl. 7333 P Add. Harl. 2251 *als
nyghe as any*; *Ft shave as ys any*.

But yet I pray unto your curtesye,
Beth hevy ageyn, or ellès mot I dye !

L'ENVÔYE DE CHAUCER

O conqueurour of Brutès Albioun,
Which that by lyne and free eleccioun
Ben verray kyng, this song to you I
sende,
And ye that mowen al myn harmamende,
Have mynde upon my supplicacioun !

PROVERBE OF CHAUCER

I

WHAT shul these clothes thus many-
folde,

Lo, this hotè somers day ?
After greet heet cometh colde ;
No man caste his pilche away.

II

Of al this worlde the large compas
Hit wol not in myn armès tweyne ;
Whoso mochel wol embrace,
Litel therof he shal distreyne.

DOUBTFUL MINOR POEMS

MERCILES BEAUTE

A TRIPLE ROUNDEL

I

YOUR yēn two wol slee me sodenly ;
I may the beautee of hem not sustene,
So woundeth hit through-out my hertēkene.

And but your word wol helen hastily
My hertēs woundē, while that hit is grene.

1. P read, *Yowre two yēn*, but cp. ll. 6 and 11.
3. *through-out*, *out* is in the margin.

Your yēn two wol slee me sodenly ;
I may the beautee of hem not sustene.

Upon my trouthe I sey you feithfully
That ye ben of my lyf and deeth the
queene ;
For with my deeth the trouthe shal be
sene. 10

Your yēn two wol slee me sodenly ;
I may the beautee of hem not sustene,
So woundeth it through-out my hertē
kene.

BALADE—COMPLEYNT DAMOURS.

II

So hath your beautee fro your hertè chaced
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

Giltlesmydeeth thus han ye me purchaced;
I sey you sooth, me nedeth not to feyne;
So hath your beautee fro your hertè
chaced ¹⁹
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne.

Allas! that nature hath in you compásed
So greet beautee, that no man may atteyne
To mercy, though he stervè for the peyne.
So hath your beautee fro your hertè
chaced
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy in his
cheyne.

III

Sin I fro Love escapèd am so fat
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

He may answer, and seyè this or that; ³⁰
I do no fors, I speke right as I mene.
Sin I fro Love escapèd am so fat
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene.

Love hath mynamey-strike out of his sclat,
And he is strike out of my bokès clene
For evermo; [ther] is non other mene.
Sin I fro Love escapèd am so fat
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

Explicit.

BALADE

AGAINST WOMAN UNCONSTAN

MADAME, for your newè-fangelnesse
Many a servaunt have ye put out of grace.
I take my leve of your unstedfastnesse,
For wel I wot, whyl ye have lyvès space,

36. *P this is; Skent ther is.*

F Ct. Stowe's ed. of *your*.

4. Ct. Stowe's ed. to *live haue*; Harl. *lyne*
and *space*.

Ye can not love ful half yeer in a place;
To newè thyng your lust is ay so kene;
In stede of blew, thus may ye were al
grene.

Right as a mirour nothing may enpresse
But, lightly as it cometh, so mot it pace,
So fareth your love, your werkès bereth
witness. ¹⁰

Ther is no feith that may your herte
embrace;

But, as a wedercok, that turneth his face
With every wynd, ye fare, and that is sene;
In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene.

Ye might be shrynèd, for your brotelnesse,
Bet than Dalyda, Creseide, or Candace;
For ever in chaungyng stant your
sikernes,

That tache may no wyght fro your
herte arace;

If ye lese oon, ye can wel tweyn purchase;
Al light for somer, ye woot wel what I
mene,

In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene.

Explicit.

COMPLEYNT DAMOURS

I, WHICH that am the sorwfullestè man
That in this world was ever yit lyvyng
And leest recoverer of him-selven can
Beginne thus my deedly compleynynge
On hir, that may to lif and deeth me
brynge,
Which hath on me no mercy ne no
rewthe
That love hir best, but sleeth me
for my trewthe.

6. Ct. Harl. *ever so*; Stowe's ed. (1561)
omits *so*.

8. Ct. Harl. Stowe *that nothyng*.

16. Ct. *bettir*, rest *better*. *Dalyda*, Delilah.
Creseide, the heroine of Chaucer's *Troilus*.
Candace, Queen Candace, who tricked Alex-
ander.

17. *stant*, all *standeth*.

4. F B insert *right* before *thus*.

Can I noght doon ne seye that may you
lyke?

Ne, certes, now, allas! allas! the while!
Your plesaunce is to laughen whan I syke,
And thus ye me from all my blisse exile.
Ye han me cast in thilké spitous ile 12
Ther never man on lyve ne mighte asterte;
This have I for I love you beste, swete
herte!

Sooth is, that wel I woot, by lyklinesse,
If that it were a thing possible to do
For to accompte your beautee and good-
nesse

I have no wonder thogh ye do me wo;
Sith I, thunwortheist that may ride or go
Durste ever thynken in so hy a place, 20
What wonder is, thogh ye do me no grace?

Allas! thus is my lif brought to an ende,
My deeth, I see, is my conclusioun;
I may wel singe 'in sory tyme I spende
My lif'; that song may have confusioun!
For mercy, pitee, and deep affeccioun,
I sey for me, for al my deedly chere,
Alle thise diden, in that, me love you dere.

And in this wyse and in dispaire I lyve
In lovè; nay, but in dispaire I dye! 30
Bút shal I thus you my deeth for-yive,
That causèdes doth me this sorwè drye?
Ye, certès, I! For she of my folye
Hath nought to done, although she
do me sterve;
Hit is not with hir wil that I hir serve!

8. Harl. om. *doon*; F B *doon to seyn that you may like*.

9. So all MSS. *Ne* is the strong accented negative.

14. F B om. *beste*.

16. Harl. om. *that*.

20. F *ncuer*; perhaps rightly.

22. F *myscheffe*; B *myscheff* for *my lif*.

24. F om. all after *tyme*.

25 ff. B reads:

that song is my confus-youn!
For mercy and pite and my salucioun,
I sey for me, I have noun felte.
All thes diden me in dispaire to melte.

F om. all after *song* in l. 25.

26. F om. *and* before *pitee* and all after second *and*.

27. F om. all after *me*.

28. F om. all after *diden*.

31. F *thanne* for *thus*.

Than sithen I am of my sorwe the cause,
And sith that I have this, withoute hir
reed,

Than may I seyn, right shortly in a clause,
It is no blame unto hir womanheed.
Though swich a wrecche as I be for hir
deed; 40

Yit alwey two thingès doon me dye,
That is to seyn, hir beautee and myn yē.

So that algates she is the verray rote
Of my disese, and of my dethe also;
For with oon word she mightè be my bote,
If that she vouchèd sauf for to do so.
Bút than is hir gladnesse at my wo?
It is hir wone plesaunce for to take,
To seen hir servaunts dyen for hir sake!

But certès, than is al my wonderyng— 50
Sithen she is the fayrest créature
As to my dom that ever was lyvyng,
The benignest and beste eek that nature
Hath wrought or shal, whyl that the
world may dure,—

Why that she leftè pitee so behynde?
It was, y-wys, a greet default in kynde.

Yit is al this no lak to hir, pardee,
But God or nature hem sore wolde I blame;
For, though she shewe no pitee unto me,
Sithen that she doth othere men the same,
I ne oughtè to despise my lady's game;
It is hir pley to laugh when that men syketh,
And I assente, al that hir list and lyketh!

Yit wolde I, as I dar, with sorwful herte
Biseche un-to your mekè womanhede
That I now dorstemysharpcorwèssmerte
Shewè by worde that ye wolde onès rede

36. Harl. *sith* for *sithen*.

37. F B *sithen* for *sith* and om. *that*.

43. F B om. *the*.

44. B om. second *of*.

45. F B a for *oon*.

48. B ins *to before plesaunce*.

49. B *servaunte*.

51. B *Sith*.

55. F B all for *so*.

57. F B om. *al*.

58. F B om. *sorc*.

62. Harl. om. *hir*. F B om. *that*.

64. Harl. *Yeo* for *Yit*.

66. F B om. *now*. Harl. *shoures* for *sorwes*.

The compleynt of me, which fulsore I drede
That I have seid here, through myn
unconnyng, 70
In any worde to your displesynge.

Lothest of anything that ever was loth
Were me, as wysly God my soule save !
To seyn a thyng through which ye
might be wroth ;
And, to that day that I be leynd in grave,
A trewer servaunt shulle ye never have ;
And, though that I on you have pleyned
here,
Foryiveth it me, myn owne herte dere !

Ever have I been, and shal, how-so I
wende
Outher to lyve or dye, your humble
trewe ;
Ye been to me my gynnyng and myn
ende, 80
Sonne of the sterre so bright and clere
of hewe,
Alwey in oon to love you freshly newe,
By God and by my trouthe, is myn entente ;
To lyve or dye, I wol it never repente !

This compleynt on seynt Valentyn's day,
Whan every foughel chesén shal his make,
To hir whos I am hool, and shal alwey,
This woful song and this compleynt I
make,
That never yit wolde me to mercy take ;
And yit wol I evermore hir serve 90
And love hir best, although she do me
sterve.

Explicit.

68. Harl. *the which I fulle*, etc.

69. Harl. *unknownynge*. F B om. *here and myn*.

70. This line seems short unless *worde* is dissyllabic, which is improbable; cp. ll. 31, 41, 47, 86, 90, which are short in all MSS.

71. F *Lothe* for *Lothest*.

77. Harl. *myne owne lady so dere*.

81. F *Bouer (ouyr) the sterre bright of hewe*.

82. Harl. *And I ay oon*.

83. F B ins. *this before is*.

86. If *foughel* (fowl) is not dissyllabic this is another nine-syllabled line. F *soule*, B *foule*.

87. F B om. *hool*.

91. F *though* for *although*.

BALADE OF COMPLEYNTE

COMPLEYNE ne coude, ne mighte myn
herté never
Mypeynés halve, ne what torment I have,
Though that I sholde in your presence
ben ever,
My hertés lady, as wisly he me save
That bountee madé, beautee list to grave
In your persone, and bad hem bothein-fere
Ever tawayte, and ay be wher ye were.

As wisly he gye alle my joyés here
As I am youres, and to you sad and trewe,
And ye, my lif and cause of my good chere
And deeth also, whan ye my peynés newe,
My worldés joye, whom I wol serve
and sewe, 12
My heven hool, and al my suffisaunce,
Whom for to serve is set al my plesaunce.

Beseching yow in my most humble wyse
Taccepte in worth this litel povré dyte
And for my trouthe my service nat despyte,
Myn observaunce eek have nat in despyse,
Ne yit to long to suffren in this plyte,
I you beseche, myn hertés lady dere, 20
Sith I you serve, and so will yeer by yere.

BALADE THAT CHAUCIER MADE

So hath myn herté caught in remembraunce
Your beautee hool and stedfast govern-
aunce,
Your vertues allé and your hie noblesse,
That you to serve is set al my plesaunce.
So wel me liketh your womanly
contenaunce,
Your fresshé fetures and your comlynesse,
That whiles I lyve, myn herte to his
maistresse

16. MS. *porr*.

20. *dere*, MS. *here* by mistake.

3. MS. *al* for *alle*.

You hath wel chose in trewe perséveraunce
Never to chaunge for no maner distresse.

And sith [that] I shal do this observaunce
Al my lif [long] withouten displeasaunce,
You for to serve with al my besynesse,
And have me somewhat in your
souvenaunce, 13

My woful hertè suffreth greet duresse,
And [hoveth humbly] with al sym-
plesse ;

My wyl I conforme to your ordynaunce
As you best list, my peynes for to redresse ;

Considryng eek how I hange in balaunce,
In your servicc, swich lo ! is my chaunce,
Abidyng grace whan that your gentillesse,
Of my grete wo listeth don alleggaunce,

8. MS. *trieve*.

10. MS. om. *that*.

11. MS. om. *long*.

15. MS. *And how humbly*.

And wyth your pitee me som wyse avaunce,
In ful rebatyng of myn hevynesse, 23
And thynketh by resoun that womanly
noblesse
Shulde nat desirè for til do the outrance
Ther as she fyndeth non unbuxomnesse.

LENVOYE

Auctour of norture ! Lady of plesaunce !
Soveraigne of beautee ! flour of woman-
hede,

Take ye non hede unto my ignorance,
But this receyveth of your goodlihede,
Thenkyng that I have caught in
remembraunce,

Your beautee hool, your stedfast
governance.

24. Perhaps *And* should be *Me*, otherwise the construction of this stanza, like that of the preceding one, is very loose.

29. *Take ye* should probably be *Taketh*; *receyveth* in next line.

A TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE

LYTE LOWYS my sone, I aperceyve wel
by certeyne evidences thyn abilite to
lerne sciences touching nombres and
porporciouns ; and as wel conside I thy
bisy praier in special to lerne the Tretys
of the Astrolabie. Than for as mochel
as a philosofre saith, 'he wrappith him
in his frende, that condescendith to the
rightfull praiers of his frende,' therefore
have I yeven the a suffisant Astrolabie as
for oure orizonte compowned after the
latitude of Oxenforde ; upon which, by
mediacioun of this litel tretys, I propose to
teche the a certain nombre of conclusions
perteynyng to the same instrument. I scie
a certain of conclusions for thre causes.

B₁ M₁ B₂ have title *Brede and milke for children*.

2. R₁ A₁ add *the werkynge of* before *a sufficient*.

The first cause is this : truste wel that alle
the conclusions that han be founde, or
ellys possibly might be founde in so noble
an instrument as is an Astrolabie ben
unknowe parfitly to eny mortal man in
this region, as I suppose. Another cause
is this, that sothly in any tretis of the
Astrolabie that I have seyn there besomme
conclusions that wol not in alle thinges
parformen her bihestes ; and somme of hem
ben to harde to thy tendir age of x yere to
conceyve. [5]

This tretis, divided in 5 parties, wol I
shewe the under full light reules and naked
wordes in Englisshche, for Latyn canst thou

5. *and somme of hem*, etc., i.e. the third cause.
5. *to thy*, etc., R₁ *to understonde and to con-
ceyve to the tender age of ye*.

5. *naked*, simple ; cp. Shak. *Two Gent.* II
iv. 142.

yit but small, my litel sone. But natheles suffice to the these trewe conclusions in Englishe as wel as sufficith to these noble clerkes Grekes these same conclusions in Greke; and to Arabiens in Arabike, and to Iewes in Ebrewé, and to the Latyn folk in Latyn; whiche Latyn folke had hem first oute of othere dyverse langages, and writen hem in her owne tunge, that is to seyn in Latyn. And god woot that in alle these langages and in many moo han these conclusions ben suffisantly lerned and taught, and yit by diverse reules; right as diverse pathes leden diverse folke the right way to Rome. Now wol I preie mekely every discret persone that redith or herith this litel tretys to have my rude endityng for excused, and my superfluite of wordes, for two causes. The first cause is for that curiouse endityng and harde sentence is ful hevy at onys for such a childe to lerne. And the secunde cause is this, that sothly me semith better to writen un-to a childe twyes a gode sentence, than he forgete it onys. [11]

And Lowys, yf so be that I shewe the in my light Englishe as trewe conclusions touching this mater, and not oonly as trewe but as many and as subtilé conclusiouns, as ben shewid in Latyn in eny commune tretys of the Astrelabie, konne me the more thanke. And preie god save the king, that is lorde of this language, and alle that him feithe berith and obeith, everiche in his degre, the more and the lasse. But conside wel that I ne usurpe not to have founden this werke of my labour or of myn engyn. I nam but a lewde compiler of the labour of olde astrologiens, and have it translaid in myn Englishe oonly for thy doctrine. And with this swerde shal I sleen envie. [15]

Prima pars.—The firste partie of this tretys shal reherse the figures and the membres of thyn Astrelabie by cause that thou shalt have the gretter knowing of thyn owne instrument.

Secunda pars.—The secunde partieshal techen the worken the verrey practik of

7. *sufficith.* We should expect *suffice*, cp. 13.

the forseide conclusiouns as ferforth and as narwe as may be shewed in so small an instrument portatif aboute. For wel woot every astrologien that smallest fracciouns ne wol not be shewid in so small an instrument as in subtilé tables calculated for a cause.

Tertia pars.—The thirde partie shal contene diverse tables of longitudes and latitudes of sterres fixe for the Astrelabie, and tables of the declinacions of the sonne, and tables of longitudes of citees and townes; and tables as well for the governaunce of a klokke, as forto fynde the altitude meridian; and many a-nothir notable conclusioun after the kalenders of the reverent clerkes, frere I. Somer and frere N. Lenne. [20]

Quarta pars.—The fourthe partie shal ben a Theorike to declare the moevyng of the celestiall bodies with the causes. The whiche fourthe partie in speciall shal shewen a table of the verrey moevyng of the mone from houre to houre every day and in every signe after thyn almenak. Upon whiche table ther foloweth a canoun suffisant to teche as wel the manere of the worchyng of the same conclusioun as to knowe in oure orizonte with whiche degre of the zodiak that the mone ariseth in any latitude, and the arisyng of any planete after his latitude fro the ecliptik lyne.

Quinta pars.—The fifthe partie shal be an Introductorie, after the statutes of oure doctours, in whiche thou maist lerne a gret parte of the generall rewles of theorik in astrologic. In whiche fifthe partie shalt thou fynden tables of equaciouns of houses after the latitude of Oxenforde; and tables of dignitees of planetes, and othere notefull thinges, yf God wol vouche saaf and his Moder the Maide moo then I behete. [25]

PART I

Here begynneth the descripcioun of the Astralabie

1. *Annulus.*—Thyn Astrolabie hath a ringe to putten on the thombe of thi right

18. *suallist*, B₁ B₂ the *smale*; A₂ R₂ *smale*.
25. Chaucer abandoned his task before he had finished Part II.

honde in taking the height of thinges. And take kepe, for from henes forthward I wol clepen the heighte of any thinge that is taken by the rewle 'the altitude' withoute moo wordes.

2. *Ansa*.—This rynge renneth in a maner toret fast to the moder of thyn Astrelabic in so rowme a space that it distourbith not the instrument to hangen after his right centre.

3. *Mater*.—The Moder of thin Astrelabye is thikkeste plate perced with a large hool, that reseiveth in hir wombe the thynne plates compowned for diverse clymates and thy reet shapen in manere of a nett or of a webbe of a loppe.

4. This moder is divided on the bakhalf with a lyne that cometh descending fro the ringe down to the netherist bordure. The whiche lyne, fro the forseide ringe unto the centre of the large hool amidde, is clepid the Southe Lyne, or ellis the Lyne Meridional. And the remenaunt of this lyne down to the bordure is clepid the North Lyne, or ellis the Lyne of Midnyght. [32]

5. Overthwart this forseide longe lyne ther crossith him a-nother lyne of the same lengthe from est to west. Of the whiche lyne, from a litel cros (+) in the bordure unto the centre of the large hool, is clepid the Est Lyne, or ellis the Lyne Orientale. And the remenaunt of this lyne, fro the forseide centre unto the bordure, is clepid the West Lyne, or ellis the Lyne Occidentale. Now hast thou here the foure quarters of thin Astrolabic divided after the foure principales plages or quarters of the firmament.

6. The est syde of thyn Astrolabic is clepid the right syde, and the west syde is clepid the lefte syde. Forgete not thys, litel Lowys. Putte the rynge of thyn Astrolabic upon the thombe of thi right honde, and than wol his right side

be toward thi lifte side, and his lefte side wol be toward thy right side. Take this rewle generall, as wel on the bak as on the wombe syde. Upon the ende of this est lyne, as I first seide, is marked a litel cros (+) where as evere moo generally is considerid the entring of the first degre in whiche the sonne ariseth. [40]

7. Fro this litel cros (+) up to the ende of the Lyne Meridional, under the rynge, shalt thou fynden the bordure divided wit 90 degrees; and by that same proporcioun is every quarter of thin Astrolabic divided. Over the whiche degrees there ben noubres of Augrym that dividen thilke same degres fro 5 to 5, as sheweth by longe strikes bitwene. Of whiche longe strikes the space bitwene contenith a myle wey, and every degre of the bordure conteneth 4 minutes, this to seien mynutes of an houre.

8. Under the compas of thilke degrees ben writen the names of the Twelve Signes: as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces. And the nombre of the degrees of thoo signes ben writen in augrym above, and with longe divisious fro 5 to 5, dyvidid fro tyme that the signe entrith unto the last ende. [45] But understonde wel that these degres of signes ben everiche of hem considred of 60 mynutes, and every mynute of 60 secundes, and so furthe into smale fraccions infinite, as saith Alkabucius. And therefore knowe wel that a degre of the bordure contenith 4 minutes, and a degre of a signe conteneth 60 minutes, and have this in mynde.

9. Next this folowith the Cercle of the Daies, that ben figured in manere of degres that contenen in nombre 365, dividid also with longe strikes fro 5 to 5, and the nombre in augrym writen under that cercle.

10. Next the cercle of the daies folowith the Cercle of the Names of the Monthes, that is to sayn Ianuarius, Februarius, Marcius, Aprilis, Maius, Iunius, Iulius, Augustus, September, October, November, December. The names of these monthes

43. *myle way*, 20 minutes; cp. *Tales*, A 3637, for temporal use of *furlong*.

30. In early editions and A₂ § 3 is preceded by a gloss on *mater*.

30. *thikkeste plate* (late MSS, *the thikkeste*, etc.), like *smallest fraccions*, 18, seems to be a Latinism, and to mean 'very thick plate.'

35. *centre* is reading of R₁ R₂; B₁ *hool*, A₁ B₂ Br. Edd. *oriental*, M₁ Dd₁ have +.

were clepid somme for her propirtees and somme by statutes of lordes Arabiens, somme by othre lordes of Rome. [50] Eke of these monthes as liked to Iulius Cesar and to Cesar Augustus somme were compounded of diverse nombres of daies, as Iulie and August. Than hath Ianuarie 31 daies, Februarie 28, Marche 31, Aprill 30, May 31, Iunius 30, Iulius 31, Augustus 31, September 30, October 31, November 30, December 31. Natheles all though that Iulius Cesar toke 2 daies oute of Fevever and putte hem in his monthe of Iuyll, and Augustus Cesar clepid the monthe of August after his name and ordeined it of 31 daies, yit truste wel that the sonne dwellith therfore nevere the more ne lasse in oon signe than in a-nother.

11. Than folewen the names of the Holy Daies in the Kalender, and next hem the lettres of the A B C on whiche thei fallen.

12. Next the forseide cercle of the A B C, under the crosse lyne, is marked the Skale in manere of 2 squyres, or ellis in manere of laddres, that serveth by his 12 pointes and his dyvisiouns of ful many a subtille conclusioun. Of this forseide skale fro the crosse lyne unto the verrey angle is clepid Umbra Recta, or ellis Umbra Extensa, and the nethir partie is clepid Umbra Versa.

13. *Regula*.—Than hast thou a brode Reule, that hath on either ende a square plate perced wit certein holes, somme more and somme lasse, to receyve the stremes of the sonne by day, and eke by mediacioun of thin eye to knowe the altitude of sterres by night. [57]

14. *Axis*.—Than is there a large Pyn in manere of an extre, that goth thorough the hole that halt the tables of the clymates and the riet in the wombe of the moder.

Equus.—Thorough whiche pyn ther goth

50. were clepid, B₁ were clepid thus; A₁ R₂ ben consideryd; R₁ were yeven; Br. Edd. taken ther names.

50. lordes Arabiens, R₂ A₁ (var.) clerkys; B₂ A₂ Arabiens; R₁ Br. Edd. Emperours.

53. The scribe of B₁ inserts Latin note showing incorrectness of Chaucer's statement.

56. Chaucer or first copyist has made mistake here, the name of the lower part being the Umbra Recta, that of the upright one Umbra Versa.

a litel wegge, whiche that is clepid the Hors, that streynith all these parties to hepe. Thys forseide grete pyn in manere of an extre is ymagyned to be the Pool Artik in thyn Astralabic. [60]

15. *Secunda pars astrolabii: Venter*.—The wombe syde of thyn Astrolabe is also divided with a longe croys in 4 quarters from est to west, fro southe to north, fro right syde to lefte side, as is the bak-side.

16. The bordure of whiche wombe side is divided fro the point of the est lyne unto the point of the southe lyne under the ringe in 90 degrees; and by that same proportion is every quarter divided, as is the bak side. That amountith 360 degrees. And understonde wel that degres of this bordure ben aunswering and consentrike to the degres of the Equinoxiall, that is dividid in the same nombre as every othir cercle is in the high hevenc.

This same bordure is dividid also with 23 lettres capitals and a small crosse (+) above the south lyne, that shewith the 24 houres equals of the klokke. And, as I have seid, 5 of these degres maken a myle wey, and 3 mileweiemaken an houre. And every degre of thys bordure contenith 4 minutes, and every minute 60 secondes. Now have I tolde the twyes. [65]

17. The plate under the riet is discribed with 3 cercles, of whiche the leest is clepid the Cercle of Cancr by cause that the heved of Cancr turnith evermo consentrik upon the same cercle. In this heved of Cancr is the grettist declinacioun northward of the sonne, and therfore is he clepid Solsticioun of Somer; whiche declinacioun after Ptholome is 23 degrees and 50 minutes as wel in Cancr as in Capricorn. This signe of Cancr is clepid the Tropik of Somer of *Tropos*, that is to seien 'ageynward.' For than beginneth the sonne to passen from usward. [70]

67. 3 cercles, B₁ tropik cercles; M₁ Dd₁ 3 tropical cercles; R₁ 3 principal cercles.

67. Chaucer begins here to expand Messahala's *Descriptio*, with extracts from John de Sacrobosco's *Tractatus de Sphæra*.

The myddel cercle in wydnesse of these 3 is clepid the Cercle Equinoxiall, upon whiche turnith evermo the hevedes of Aries and Libra. And understonde wel that evermo thys Cercle Equinoxiall turnith iustly from verrey est to verrey west as I have shewed the in the speer solide. This same cercle is clepid also the Weyer of the day; for whan the sonne is in the hevedes of Aries and Libra, than ben the dayes and the nightes ylike of lengthe in all the worlde. And therfore ben these 2 signes called the Equinoxiiis. And alle that moeveth withinne the hevedes of these Aries and Libra, his moevyng is clepid Northward; and alle that moevith withoute these hevedes, his moevyng is clepid Southward, as fro the equinoxiall. Take kepe of these latitudes North and South, and forgeteit nat. [75] By this cercle equinoxiall ben considred the 24 houres of the klokke, for evermo the arisyng of 15 degrees of the equinoxiall makith an houre equal of the klokke. This equinoxiall is clepid the gurdle of the first moevyng, or ellis of the first moevable. And note that the first moevyng is clepid moevyng of the first moevable of the 8 speer, whiche moevyng is from est in-to west, and eft ageyn in-to est. Also it is clepid girdel of the first moevyng for it departith the first moevable, that is to seyn the spere, in two ilike partyes evene distantes fro the poles of this world.

The widest of these 3 principal cercles is clepid the Cercle of Capricorne by cause that the heved of Capricorne turnith evermo consentrik upon the same cercle. In the heved of this forseide Capricorne is the grettist declinacioun southward of the sonne, and therfore it is clepid the Solsticium of Wynter. This signe of Capricorne is also clepid the Tropic of

Wynter, for than begynneth the sonne to come ageyn to usward. [82]

18. Upon this forseide plate ben compassed certeyn cercles that highten Almykanteras, of whiche somme of hem semen parfit cercles and somme semen inparfit. The centre that stondith anyddes the narwest cercle is clepid the Cenyth. And the netherist cercle, or the first cercle, is clepid the Orizonte, that is to seyn the cercle that divideth the two emysperics, that is the partie of the hevene above the erthe and the partie by-nethe. These almykanteras ben compowned by 2 and 2, all be it so that on diverse Astrelabics somme almykanteras ben divided by oon, and some by two, and some by thre, after the quantite of the Astrelabie. This forseide Cenyth is ymaged to ben the verrey point over the crowne of thin heved. And also this Cenyth is the verray pool of the orizonte in every regioun. [88]

19. From this cenyth, as it semeth, there comen a maner croked strikes like to the claws of a loppe, or elles like the werke of a wommans calle, in kervyng overtwart the almykanteras. And these same strikes or divisions ben clepid Azimutes, and thei dividen the orisounte of thin Astrelabic in 24 divisouns. And these azymutes serven to knowe the costes of the firmament, and to othre conclusouns, as forto knowe the cenyth of the sonne and of every sterre.

20. Next these azymutes under the cercle of Cancer ben there 12 divisouns embelif, muche like to the shap of the azimutes, that shewen the spaces of the houres of planetes. [92]

21. *Aranca*.—The riet of thin Astrelabic with thy zodiak, shapen in manere of a net or of a lopwebbe after the olde descripcioun, whiche thou maist turnen up and down as thiself liketh, contenith certain nombre of sterres fixes, with her longitudes and latitudes determinat, yf so be that the maker have not erred. The names of the sterres ben writen in the margyn of the riet there as thei sitte, of

73. *Weyer*, 'equator'; *euenor*?

77. Cp. Sacrobosco: 'et dicitur cingulus primi motus unde sciendum quod primus motus dicitur motus primi mobilis, hoc est nonne sphaerae caeli ultimi,' etc. So '8' must be error for '9.' Likewise 9 seems to be omitted before *spherre*, below; cp. Sacrobosco: 'Dicitur ergo cingulus primi motus quia cingit sive dividit primum mobile, scilicet sphaeram nonam,' etc.

whiche sterres the smale point is clepid the centre. And understonde also that alle the sterres sitting with-in the Zodiak of thin Astrelabie ben clepid Sterres of the North, for thei arise by northe the est lyne. And all the remenaunt fixed oute of the zodiak ben clepid Sterres of the South. But I seie not that thei arisen alle by southe the est lyne; witnesse on Aldeberan and Algomeyse. [97] Generally understonde this rewle, that thilke sterres that ben clepid Sterres of the North arisen rather than the degre of her longitude, and alle the Sterres of the South arisen after the degre of her longitude—this is to seyn sterres fixed in thyn Astrelabie. The mesure of the longitude of sterres is taken in the Lyne Ecliptik of hevene, under whiche lyne whan that the sonne and the mone be lyne-right, or ellis in the superñie of this lyne, than is the eclipse of the sonne or of the mone, as I shal declare and eke the cause why. But sothely the ecliptik lyne of thy zodiak is the utterist bordure of thy zodiak there the degrees be marked. [100]

Thy Zodiak of thin Astrelabie is shapen as a compas whiche that contenith a large brede as after the quantite of thyn Astrelabie, in ensaumples that the zodiak in hevene is ymagined to ben a superfice contenyng a latitude of 12 degrees, whereas alle the remenaunt of cercles in the hevene ben ymagined verrey lynes withoute eny latitude. Amiddes this celestial zodiak is ymagined a lyne whiche that is clepid the Ecliptik Lyne, under whiche lyne is evermo the weye of the sonne. Thus ben there 6 degres of the zodiak on that oo syde of the lyne and 6 degrees on that othir. This zodiak is divided in 12 principale divisouns that departen the 12 signes, and, for the streitnesse of thin Astrolabie, than is every smal divisoun in

a signe departed by two degrees and two, I mene degrees contenyng 60 mynutes. And this forseide hevenysse zodiak is clepid the Cercle of the Signes, or the Cercle of the Bestes, for 'zodia' in language of Greke sowneth 'bestes' in Latyn tunge. And in the zodiak ben the 12 signes that han names of bestes, or ellis for whan the sonne ennth into eny of tho signes he takith the propirte of suche bestes, or ellis for that the sterres that ben ther fixed ben disposid in signes of bestes or shape like bestes, or elles whan the planetes ben under thilke signes thei causen us by her influence operaciouns and effectes like to the operaciouns of bestes. [108]

And understonde also that whan an hote planete cometh into an hote signe, than encreasith his hete; and yf a planete be colde, than amensith his coldenesse by cause of the hoot sygne. And by thys conclusioun maist thou take ensaumples in alle the signes, be thei moist or drie, or moeble or fixe, reknyng the qualite of the planete as I first seide. And everiche of these 12 signes hath respecte to a certeyn parcel of the body of a man, and hath it in governaunce, as Aries hath thin heved, and Taurus thy nekke and thy throte, Gemini thin armeholes and thin armes, and so furthe as shal be shewid more pleyne in the 5 partie of this tretis.

This zodiak, whiche that is parte of the 8 speer, overkervith the equinoxial, and he overkervith him ageyn in evene parties; and that oo half declineth southward; and that othir northward, as plainly declarith the Tretys of the Speer.

22. *Labellum*.—Than hast thou a Label that is shapen like a reule, save that it is streight and hath no plates on either ende with holes. But with the smale point of the forseide label shalt thou calcule thin

97. B₁ inserts *Menkar Algenze cor Leonis* after *Aldeberan* with marginal note saying that they are found on the Merton College Astrolabe.

100. Since only the north half of the Zodiak-band is represented on the Astrolabe.

105. Chaucer omits to say that each sign contains 30°.

113. 8 speer, again a mistake for '9 speer'; cp. 77. The nine spheres are those of the moon, of the six planets, of the fixed stars, and of the zodiac and primum mobile. Chaucer places the zodiac in the 9th in *Tales*, F 1283.

113. i.e. John de Sacrobosco's *Tractatus de Sphæra*, ii. 'de zodiaco circulo', whence Chaucer derives the foregoing description.

equaciouns in the bordure of thin Astralabic, as by thin Almury. [115]

23. *Denticulus*. — Thin Almury is clepid the Denticle of Capricorne or ellis the Calculer. This same almury sitt fixe in the heved of Capricorne, and it serveth of many a necessarie conclusioun in equations of thinges as shal be shewid.

Here endith the descripcioun of the Astrelabie and here begynne the conclusions of the Astrelabie.

PART II

1. *Conclusio. To fynde the degre in whiche the sonne is day by day, after his cours aboute*

Rekne and knowe whiche is the day of thy monthe, and ley thy rewle up that same day, and than wol the verrey poynt of thy rewle sitten in the bordure upon the degre of thy sonne.

Ensamble as thus :—The yeer of oure lord 1391, the 12 day of Marche at midday, I wolde knowe the degre of the sonne. I soughte in the bakhalf of myn Astrelabie and fonde the Cercle of the Daies, the whiche I knowe by the names of the monthes writen under the same cercle. Tho leyde I my reule over this forseide day, and fonde the point of my reule in the bordure upon the firste degre of Aries, a litel with-in the degre. And thus knowe I this conclusioun. [121]

A-nothir day I wolde knowen the degre of my sonne, and this was at midday in the 13 day of December. I fonde the day of the monthe in manere as I seide; tho leide I my rewle upon this forseide 13 day, and fonde the point of my rewle in the bordure upon the firste degre of Capricorne alite with-in the degre. And than had I of this conclusioun the ful experience.

118. *u^o*, B₁ A₁ A₂ R₂ Br. Edd. *u^{on}*; B₂ *of*.

119. Probably the date at which Chaucer was writing.

120. *knowe*, A₂ B₂ Br. Edd. *knew*.

121. *knowe*, B₂ R₂ Br. Edd. *knew*.

2. *Conclusio. To knowe the altitude of the sonne or of othre celestial bodies*

Putte the ryng of thyn Astrelabie upon thy right thombe, and turne thi lifte syde ageyn the light of the sonne; and renewe thy rewle up and down til that the stremes of the sonne shine thorough bothe holes of thi rewle. Loke than how many degrees thy rule is aريسed from the litel crois upon thin est lyne, and take there the altitude of thi sonne. And in this same wise maist thou knowe by night the altitude of the mone or of brighte sterres. [127]

This chapitre is so generall evere in oon that there nedith no more declaracioun; but forgete it not.

3. *Conclusio. To knowe every tyme of the day by light of the sonne; and every tyme of the nyght by the sterres fixe; and eke to knowe by nyght or by day the degre of eny signe that ascendith on the est orisonte, that is clepid commonly the ascendent, or ellis horoscopus*

Take the altitude of the sonne whan the list, as I have seide, and sette the degre of the sonne, in caas that it be before the myddel of the day, amonge thyn almykanteras on the est syde of thin Astrelabie; and if it be after the myddel of the day, sette the degre of thy sonne upon the west syde. Take this manere of setting for a general rule, ones for evere. And whan thou hast sette the degre of thy sonne upon as many almykanteras of height as was the altitude of the sonne taken by thy rule, ley over thi label upon the degre of the sonne; and than wol the point of thi labelle sitte in the bordure upon the verrey tyde of the day. [132]

Ensamble as thus :—The yere of oure lord 1391, the 12 day of Marche, I wolde knowe the tyde of the day. I toke the altitude of my sonne, and fonde that it was 25 degrees and 30 of minutes of height in

128. In A₂ Add. 2302 Br. Edd. a spurious conclusio is inserted here.

134. *of minutes*, B₁ B₂ R₂ Br. Edd. omit *of*; perhaps an imitation of *triginta minutorum*.

the bordure on the bak side. Tho turned I myn Astrelabye, and by cause that it was before mydday, I turned my riet and sette the degre of the sonne, that is to seyn the first degre of Aries, on the right side of myn Astrelabye upon 25 degrees and 30 mynutes of height among myn almykanteras. Tho leide I my label upon the degre of my sonne, and fonde the point of my label in the bordure upon a capitale lettre that is clepid an X. Tho rekned I alle the capitale lettres fro the lyne of mydnight unto this forseide lettre X, and fonde that it was 9 of the klokke of the day. Tho loked I doun upon the est orizonte, and fonde there the 20 degre of Geminis ascendyng, whiche that I toke for myn ascendent. And in this wise had I the experience for evermo in whiche manere I shulde knowe the tyde of the day and eke myn ascendent. [139]

Tho wolde I wite the same nyght folewyng the houre of the nyght, and wroughte in this wise :—Among an heepe of sterres fixe it liked me for to take the altitude of the faire white sterre that is clepid Alhabor, and fonde hir sitting on the west side of the lyne of midday, 12 degrees of heighte taken by my rewle on the bak side. Tho sette I the centre of this Alhabor upon 12 degrees among myn almykanteras upon the west side, by cause that she was founde on the west side. Tho leyde I my label over the degre of the sonne, that was descendid under the west orisounte, and rekned all the lettres capitals fro the lyne of midday unto the point of my label in the bordure, and fonde that it was passed 9 of the klokke the space of 10 degrees. Tho lokid I doun upon myn est orisounte, and fonde ther 10 degrees of Scorpius

ascendyng, whom I toke for myn ascendent. And thus lerned I to knowe onys for evere in whiche manere I shuld come to the houre of the nyght, and to myn ascendent, as verely as may be taken by so smal an instrument. [145]

But natheles this rule in generall wol I warne the for evere :—Nemake the nevere bolde to have take a just ascendent by thin Astrelabic, or elles to have sette justly a klokke, whan eny celestial body by whiche that thou wenyst governe thilke thinges be nigh the southe lyne. For truste wel whan the sonne is nygh the meridional lyne, the degre of the sonne renneth so longe consentrike upon the almykanteras that sothly thou shalt erre fro the just ascendent. The same conclusion sey I by the centre of eny sterre fixe by nyght. And, more over, by experience I wote wel that, in our orisounte, from xi of the klokke unto oon of the klokke in taking of a just ascendent in a portatif Astrelabic it is harde to knowe—I mene from xi of the klokke before the houre of noon til oon of the klokke next folewyng. [150]

4. *A special declaracioun of the Ascendent*

The Ascendent sothly, as wel in alle Nativites as in questions and eleccions of tymes, is a thinge which that these Astrologiens gretly observen. Wherefore me semeth convenyent, syth that I speke of the Ascendent, to make of it speciall declaracioun.

The Ascendent, sothly to take it at the largest, is thilke degre that ascendith at eny of these forseide tymes upon the est orisounte. And therefore, yf that eny planete ascende at thatt same tyme in thilke forseide degre, than hath he no latitude fro the ecliptik lyne, but he is than in the degre of the ecliptik whiche that is the degre of his longitude. Men sayn that planete is *In Horoscopo*.

Libra; R₁ R₂ Edd. 20 degrees of *Libra*; R₂ 12 degrees of *Libra*; M₁ 10 degrees of *Taurus*.

154. degre, M₁ Dd₁ latitude; Dd₂ R₁ same degre; B₂ R₂ orizonte; corr. of R₁ (var.) A₂ latitude oryzont.

154. degre . . . degre, MSS. except B₁ omit.

138. *doun upon*, A₁ A₂ B₂ R₂ on.

138. *Geminis*, so in MSS.

141. 12 degrees, R₁ (whose numerals are not trustworthy) Dd₁ (corrected later) A₂ Edd. 13 degrees; similarly in 142, except that 18 added later in R₁.

143. 9 of the klokke, Dd₁ reads 8; R₁ 5; A₂ B₂ R₂ Edd. 7.

143. 10 degrees, Dd₁ R₁ read 2; A₂ B₂ R₂ Edd. 11.

144. 10 degrees of *Scorpius*, Dd₁ 23 degrees of

But sothly the House of Ascendent, that is to seyn the first hous or the est angle, is a thinge more brode and large. For, after the statutes of Astrologiens, what celestial body that is 5 degrees above thilke degre that ascendith, or with inne that nombre, that is to seyn neer the degre that ascendith, yit rekne they thilke planete in the ascendent. [156] And what planete that is under thilke degre that ascendith the space of 15 degrees, yit seyn thei that thilke planete is 'like to him that is the Hous of the Ascendent.' But sothly, if he passe the boundes of these forseide spaces, above or byneth, theiseyn that the planete is 'fallyng fro the ascendent.' Yit saien these Astrologiens that the ascendent and eke the lorde of the ascendent may be shapen forto be fortunat or infortunat. As thus:—A 'fortunat ascendent' clepen they whan that no wicked planete, as Saturne or Mars or elles the Tayle of the Dragoun, is in the house of the ascendent, ne that no wicked planete have noon aspect of enemyte upon the ascendent. But thei wol caste that thei have a fortunat planete in hir ascendent, and yit in his felicity; and than say thei that it is wel. [161]

Further over thei seyn that the infortunying of an ascendent is the contrarie of these forseide thinges. The Lord of the Ascendent sey thei that he is fortunat whan he is in gode place fro the ascendent, as in an angle, or in a succident where as he is in hys dignite and comfortid with frendly aspectes of planetes and wel resceyved; and eke that he may seen the ascendent; and that he be not retrograd, ne combust, ne joyned with no shrewe in the same signe; ne that he be not in his discencioun, ne joyned with no planete in his descencioun, ne have upon him noon aspect infortunat; and than sey thei that he is well. [165]

Natheles these ben observaunces of judicial matere and rytes of payens in which my spirit hath no feith, ne knowing of her

157. 15 should be 25. Probably Chaucer's mistake. Brae cites Ptolemy, iii. 10, 'viginti quinque.'

horoscopum. For they seyn that every signe is departid in thre evene parties by 10 degrees, and thilke porcioun they clepe a face. And al though that a planete have a latitude fro the ecliptik, yit sey somme folke, so that the planete arise in that same signe with eny degre of the forseide face in which his longitude is rekned, that yit is the planete in *horosco*, be it in nativite or in eleccion etc. [168]

5. *Conclusio*. To knowe the verrey equacioun of the degre of the sonne yf so be that it fulle bitwene thyn almykanteras

For as muche as the almykanteras in thin Astrelabie ben compowned by two and two, where as somme almykanteras in sondry astrelabies be compowned by 1 and 1, or elles by 3 and 3, it is necessarie to thy lernyng to teche the first to knowe and worke with thin owne instrument. Wherefore whan that the degre of thi sonne fallith bytwix 2 almykanteras, or ellis yf thin almykanteras ben graven with over gret a poynt of a compas (for bothe these thinges may causen errour as wel in knowing of the tide of the day, as of the verrey ascendent), thou must worken in this wise:—[170]

Sette the degre of thy sonne upon the hyer almykanteras of bothe, and wayte wel where as thin almyry touchith the bordure and sette there a pricke of ynke. Sett down agayn the degre of the sunne upon the nether almykanteras of bothe, and sett there another pricke. Remove than thin almyry in the bordure evene amidde bothe prickes, and this wol lede justly the degre of thi sonne to sitte atwix bothe almykanteras in his right place. Ley than thy label over the degre of thi sonne, and fynde in the bordure the verrey tyde of the day, or of the night. And as verrailly shalt thou fynde upon thin est orisonte thin ascendent. [174]

168. *eleccion*, i.e. election of times.

169. by 3 and 3, B₁ R₂ Dd₁ by 2 and 2; R₁ by 2 and; A₂ Br. by 2.

170. of thi sonne, B₁ B₂ Br. Th. of the sonne. thy and the are often thus confused.

173. betwix, R₁ A₂ R₂ Br. betwene; B₁ atwix.

6. *To knowe the sprynge of the dawninge
and the ende of the evenyng the
whiche ben called the two crepuscules*

Sette the nadir of thy sonne upon 18 degrees of height amonge thyn almykanteras on the west side; and ley thy label on the degre of thy sonne, and than shal the point of thy label shewen the sprynge of the day. Also set the nader of thy sonne upon 18 degrees of height among thin almykanteras on the est side, and ley over thy label upon the degre of the sonne, and with the point of thy label fynde in the bordure the ende of the evenyng, that is verrey nyght.

The nader of the sonne is thilke degre that is opposyt to the degre of the sonne in the 7 signe. As thus :--every degre of Aries by ordre is nadir to every degre of Libra by ordre, and Taurus to Scorpioun, Gemini to Sagittarie, Cancer to Capricorn, Leo to Aquarie, Virgo to Pisces. And yif eny degre in thy zodiak be derke, his nadir shal declare hym. [179]

7. *Conclusio. To knowe the Arch of the
Day, that some folke callen the Day
Artificial, fro sonne arisyng tyl it go
to reste*

Sette the degre of thi sonne upon thin est orisonte, and ley thy label on the degre of the sonne and at the point of thy label in the bordure sette a pricke. Turne than thy riet aboute tyl the degre of the sonne sitte upon the west orisonte, and ley thy label upon the same degre of the sonne, and at the poynt of thy label sette there a nother pricke. Rekne than the quantite of tyme in the bordure bitwixe bothe prickes, and take there thyn arch of the day. The remenaunt of the bordure under the orisonte is the arch of the nyght. Thus maist thou rekne bothe arches or every porcioun of whether that the liketh. And by this manere of worching maist thou se how longe that eny sterre fixe dwelleth

180. Rubric. *go to reste*, A₂ Br. *goth down*. The former is Chaucer's usual expression; cp. *Tales*, A 30, A 1779.

above the erthe, fro tyme that he risith til he go to rest. But the day natural, that is to seyn 24 houres, is the revolucioun of the equinoxial with as muche partie of the zodiak as the sonne of his propre moeving passith in the mene while. [185]

8. *Conclusio. To turne the houres in-
equales in houres equales*

Knowe the nombre of the degrees in the houres inequales, and depart hem by 15, and take there thin houres equales.

9. *Conclusio. To knowe the quantite
of the day vulgar, that is to scyn
fro sprynge of the day unto verrey
nyght*

Knowe the quantite of thy crepuscules, as I have taught in the chapitre before, and adde hem to the arch of thy day artificial, and take there the space of alle the hool day vulgar unto verrey night. The same manere maist thou worche to knowe the quantite of the vulgar nyght. [188]

10. *Conclusio. To knowe the quantite of
houres inequales by day*

Understonde wel that these houres inequales ben clepid houres of planetes. And understonde wel that som tyme ben thei lenger by day than by night, and som tyme the contrarie. But understonde wel that evermo generally the houre unequal of the day with the houre unequal of the night contenen 30 degrees of the bordure, whiche bordure is evermo answering to the degrees of the equinoxial. Wherefore departe the arch of the day artificial in 12, and take there the quantite of the houre unequal by day. And if thou abate the quantite of the houre unequal by day out of 30, than shal the remenaunt that levith performe the houre unequal by night. [193]

184. *fro tyme*, A₂ B₂ R₂ Br. *fro the tyme*.

188. *Knowe the*, R₁ A₂ *Knowe thou the*.

190. *And understonde*, B₁ *This understonde*; B₂ omits *And*.

191. *contenen*, A₂ R₂ Br. *contenyth*.

193. 30, R₁ A₂ B₂ R₂ Br. Th. 360 degrees.

11. *Conclusio. To knowe the quantite of heures equales*

The quantite of heures equales, that is to seyn the heures of the klokke, ben departid by 15 degreescal redy in the bordure of thin Astrelaby as wel by night as by day, generally forevere. What nedith more declaracioun?

Wherfore whan the list to knowe how many heures of the klokke ben passed, or eny part of eny of these heures that ben passed, or ellis how many heures or parties of heures ben to come fro suche a tyme to suche a tyme by day or by night, knowe the degre of thy sonne, and ley thy label on it. Turne thy ryet aboute joynly with thy label, and with the poynt of it rekne in the bordure fro the sonne arise unto that same place there thou desirist, by day as by nyght. This conclusioun wol I declare in the last chapitre of the 4 Partie of this tretys so openly that there shal lakke no worde that nedith to the declaracioun. [198]

12. *Conclusio. Special Declaracioun of the heures of planetes*

Understonde wel that evermo, fro the arisyng of the sonne til it go to rest, the nadir of the sonne shal shewe the heure of the planete, and fro that tyme forward al the night til the sonne arise; than shal the verrey degre of the sonne shewe the heure of the planete.

Ensample as thus:—The xiiij day of Marche fyl upon a Saturday, peraventure, and atte risyng of the sonne I fonde the secunde degre of Aries sittynge upon myn est orisonte, al be it that it was but litel. Than fonde I the 2 degre of Libra, nadir of my sonne, descending on my west orisonte, upon whiche west orisonte every day generally atte sonne arist entrith the heure of every planete, after whiche planete the

day berith his name, and endith in the next strike of the planete under the forseide west orisonte. And evere as the sonne clymbith upper and upper, so goth his nadir downer and downer, teching by suche strikes the heures of planetes by ordir as they sitten in the hevene. The firste heure inequal of every Saturday is to Saturne, and the seconde to Iupiter, the thirde to Mars, the fourthe to the sonne, the fife to Venus, the sixte to Mercurius, the seventh to the mone. And then ageyn the 8 is to Saturne, the 9 to Jupiter, the 10 to Mars, the 11 to the sonne, the 12 to Venus. And now is my sonne gon to reste as for that Saturday. Than shewith the verrey degre of the sonne the heure of Mercurie entring under my west orisonte at eve; and next him succedith the mone, and so furthe by ordir, planete after planete in heure after heure, all the nyght longe til the sonne arise. Now risith the sonne that Sunday by the morwe, and the nadir of the sonne upon the west orisonte shewith me the entring of the heure of the forseide sonne. And in this manere succedith planete under planete fro Saturne unto the mone, and fro the mone up ageyn to Saturne, heure after heure generally. And thus knowe I this conclusioun. [209]

13. *Conclusio. To knowe the altitude of the sonne in myddes of the day that is clepid the Altitude Meridian*

Sette the degre of the sonne upon the lync meridional, and rekne how many degrees of almykanteras ben bitwyxe thin est orisonte and the degre of thy sonne, and take there thin altitude meridian, this to seyn the highest of the sonne as for that day. So maist thou knowe in the same lync the heighest cours that eny sterre fixe

205. the 8, B₁ B₂ 8 heure.

205. And so with any other day, the series beginning with the planet whose name accords with the day; e.g. Monday, to the moon; Wednesday, to Mercury; Friday, to Venus, etc.

207. til the sonne, B₂ R₂ to the sonne.

208. that Sunday, R₁ Br. the Sunday; A₂ at Sunday; R₂ on Sunday.

210. Conclusions 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 follow conclusion 21 in MSS. of group γ; cp. Introd.

210. this to seyn, A₂ R₂ Br. Th. that ys to seyn

198. Cp. 'Quarta pars' in Chaucer's Introd.

199. The 'Heures of Planetes' is a matter of astrology, depending on the fact that each planet belonged to a particular day of the week.

200. The 13th of March fell on a Saturday in 1389 and in 1395.

200. atte risyng, M₁ Dd₁ B₃ R₂ Br. atte the arisyng.

clymbeth by night. This is to seyn that whan eny sterre fixe is passid the lyne meridional, than begynneth it to descende; and so doth the sonne. [211]

14. *Conclusio. To knowe the degre of the sonne by thy ryet for a maner curiosite*

Seke besily with thy rule the highest of the sonne in mydd of the day. Turne than thin Astrelabie, and with a pricke of ynke marke the nombre of that same altitude in the lyne meridional; turne than thy ryet aboute tyl thou fynde a degre of thy zodiak according with the pricke, this is to seyn, sitting on the pricke. And in soth thou shalt finde but 2 degrees in al the zodiak of that condicioun; and yit thilke 2 degrees ben in diverse signes. Than maist thou lightly, by the sesoun of the yere, knowe the signe in whiche that is the sonne. [215]

15. *Conclusio. To knowe whiche day is like to whiche day as of lengthe*

Loke whiche degrees ben ylike fer fro the hevedes of Cancer and Capricorne, and loke when the sonne is in eny of thilke degrees; than ben the dayes ylike of lengthe. This is to seyn that as longe is that day in that monthe, as was suche a day in suche a monthe; there varieth but litel.

Also, yf thou take 2 dayes naturales in the yere ylike fer fro either pointes of the equinoxial in the opposyt parties, than as longe is the day artificiall of that oon day as is the night of that othir, and the contrarie. [218]

16. *Conclusio. This chapitre is a maner Declaracioun to Conclusiouns that folowen*

Understonde wel that thy zodiak is departed in two halfe circles, as fro the heved of Capricorne unto the heved of Cancer, and ageynward fro the heved of Cancer unto the heved of Capricorne. The heved of Capricorne is the lowest point whereas the sonne goth in wynter, and the heved of Cancer is

the heighest point in whiche the sonne goth in somer. And therfore understonde wel that eny two degrees that ben ylike fer fro eny of these two hevedes, truste wel that thilke two degrees ben of ilike declinacioun, be it southward or northward, and the daies of hem ben ilike of lengthe and the nyghtes also, and the shadowes ilyke, and the altitudes ylike atte midday for evere. [222]

17. *Conclusio. To knowe the verrey degre of eny maner sterre, straunge or unstraunge, after his longitude; though he be indeterminat in thin Astrolabye, sothly to the trouthe thus he shal be knowe*

Take the altitude of this sterre whan he is on the est syde of the lyne meridional, as neigh as thou mayst gesse; and take an ascendent anon right by som manere sterre fixe whiche that thou knowist; and forgete not the altitude of the firste sterre ne thyn ascendent. And whan that this is done, aspye diligently whan this same firste sterre passith eny thyng the south westward; and cacche him anon right in the same nombre of altitude on the west syde of this lyne meridional, as he was kaught on the est syde; and take a newe ascendent anon ryght by som manere sterre fixe whiche that thou knowist, and forgete not this secunde ascendent. And whan that this is done, rekne than how many degrees ben bitwixe the first ascendent and the secunde ascendent; and rekne wel the myddel degre bitwene bothe ascendentes, and sette thilke myddel degre upon thyn est orizonte; and wayte than what degre that sitte upon the lyne meridional, and take there the verrey degre of the ecliptik in whiche the sterre stondith for the tyme. For in the ecliptik is the longitude of a celestial body rekned, evene fro the heved of Aries unto the ende of Pisces; and his latitude is rekned after

223. Rubric. *longitude*, A₂ Br. Th. *latitude*.

225. *passith eny thyng*, etc., i.e. passes west of the meridional line.

225. *cacche*, M₁ D_d *hath*; A₂ Br. *take*; B₂ *sett*.

228. *wayte than*, A₂ R₂ Br. Th. *than loke*.

216. A₂ B₂ Edd. have slightly different rubric.

the quantite of his declynacioun north or south toward the polys of this world. [229]

As thus:—yif it be of the sonne or of eny fixesterre, rekne hys latitude or his declinacioun fro the equinoxial cerle; and if it be of a planete, rekne than the quantite of his latitude fro the ecliptik lyne, al be it so that fro the equinoxial may the declinacioun or the latitude of eny body celestial be rekned after the site north or south and after the quantite of his declinacioun. And right so may the latitude or the declinacioun of eny body celestial, save oonly of the sonne, after hyssite north or south and after the quantite of his declinacioun, be rekned fro the ecliptik lyne, fro which lyne alle planetes som tyme declinen north or south save oonly the forseide sonne. [233]

18. *Conclusio. To knowe the degrees of longitudes of fixe sterres after that they be determinat in thin Astrelabie, yf so be that thei be trowey sette*

Sette the centre of the sterre upon the lyne meridional, and take kepe of thy zodiak and loke what degre of eny signe that sitte upon the same lyne meridional at that same tyme, and take there the degre in which the sterre stondith; and with that same degre cometh that same sterre unto that same lyne fro the orisonte. [235]

19. *Conclusio. To knowe wil whiche degre of the zodiak eny sterre fixe in thin Astrelabie arisith upon the est orisonte al though his dwelling be in a nother signe*

Sette the centre of the sterre upon the est orisonte, and loke what degre of eny signe that sitt upon the same orisonte at that same tyme. And understonde wel that

231. the site, R₂ Br. Th. the syght; B₁ site; A₂ B₂ that it syteth.

232. site, A₂ sytting; R₂ syght.

234. centre, i.e. the point of the tongue representing it in the Astrolabe.

235. that same degre, R₁ A₂ R₂ Br. Th. the same degre; and frequently the same for that same in late MSS.

236. Rubric. his dwelling, R₂ his orizonte; Br. Th. the orizonte.

with that same degre arisith that same sterre. [236]

And thys mervelous arisyng with a straunge degre in a nother signe is by cause that the latitude of the sterre fixe is either north or south fro the equinoxial. But sothly the latitudes of planetes be commonly rekned fro the ecliptik by cause that noon of hem declyneth but fewe degrees oute fro the brede of the zodiak. And take gode kepe of this chapitre of arisyng of celestial bodies; for truste wel that neyther mone ne sterre, as in our embelif orisonte, arisith with that same degre of his longitude save in oo cas, and that is whan they have no latitude fro the ecliptik lyne. But natheles som tyme is everiche of these planetes under the same lyne. [240]

20. *Conclusio. To knowe the declinacioun of eny degre in the zodiak fro the equinoxial cerle*

Sette the degre of eny signe upon the lyne meridional, and rekne hys altitude in the almykanteras fro the est orisonte up to the same degre sette in the forseide lyne, and sette there a prik; turne up than thy riet, and sette the heved of Aries or Libra in the same meridional lyne, and sette there a nother prik. And whan that this is done, conside the altitudes of hem bothe; for sothely the difference of thilke altitudes is the declinacioun of thilke degre fro the equinoxial. And yf it so be that thilke degre be northward fro the equinoxial, than is his declinacyoun north; yif it be southward, than is it south.

21. *Conclusio. To knowe fro what latitude in eny regioun the almykanteras of eny table ben compowned*

Rekne how many degrees of almykanteras in the meridional lyne ben fro the cerle equinoxial unto the cenyth, or elles from the pool artyk unto the north orisonte; and for so gret a latitude, or for so smal a latitude, is the table compowned. [243]

245. Rubric. eny, A₂ R₂ Th. my; Br. thy.

22. *Conclusio. To know in special the latitude of oure cowntre, I mene after the latitude of Oxenford, and the height of oure pool*

Understonde wel that as fer is the heved of Aries or Libra in the equinoxial fro oure orisonte as is the cennyth fro the pool artik ; and as high is the pool artik fro the orisonte as the equinoxial is fer fro the cennyth. I prove it thus by the latitude of Oxenford : understonde wel that the height of oure pool artik fro oure north orisonte is 51 degrees and 50 mynutes ; than is the cennyth fro oure pool artik 38 degrees and 10 mynutes ; than is the equinoxial from oure cennyth 51 degrees and 50 mynutes ; than is oure south orisonte from oure equinoxial 38 degrees and 10 mynutes. Understonde wel this rekenyng. Also forgete not that the cennyth is 90 degrees of height from oure orisonte, and oure equinoxiall is 90 degrees from oure pool artik. Also this shorte rule is soth, that the latitude of eny place in a regioun is the distaunce fro the cennyth unto the equinoxial. [251]

23. *Conclusio. To prove evidently the latitude of eny place in a regioun by the prove of the height of the pool artik in that same place*

In some wynters nyght whan the firmament is clere and thikke sterred, wayte a tyme til that eny sterre fixe sitte lyne right perpendiculer over the pool artik, and clepe that sterre A ; and wayte another sterre that sitte lyne right under A, and under the pool, and clepe that sterre F. And understonde wel that F is not considrid but oonly to declare that A sitte evene over the pool. Take than anoon right the altitude of A from the orisonte, and forgete it not ; lete A and F goo fare wel tyl ageynst the dawaynyng a gret while, and come than ageyn, and abide til that A is evene under the pool, and under F ; for sothly than wol

F sitte over the pool, and A wol sitte under the pool. Take than eft sonys the altitude of A from the orisonte, and noteas wel his secunde altitude as hys first altitude. And whan that this is doon, rekene how many degrees that the first altitude of A exceedith his secunde altitude, and take half thilke porcioun that is exceedid and adde it to his secunde altitude, and take there the elevacioun of thy pool, and eke the latitude of thy regioun ; for these two ben of oo nombre, this is to seyn as many degrees as thy pool is elevate, so muche is the latitude of the regioun. [258]

Ensampl as thus :—peraventure the altitude of A in the evenyng is 56 degrees of height ; than wol his secunde altitude or the dawaynyng be 48 degrees, that is 8 degrees lasse than 56 that was his first altitude att even. Take than the half of 8 and adde it to 48 that was is secunde altitude, and than hast thou 52. Now hast thou the height of thy pool and the latitude of the regioun. But understonde wel that to prove this conclusioun and many a nother faire conclusioun, thou must have a plomet hangyng on a lyne, heygher than thin heved, on a perche ; and thilke lyne must hange evene perpendiculer bytwice the pool and thin eye ; and than shalt thou seen yf A sitte evene over the pool, and over F atte evene ; and also yf F sitte evene over the pool and over A or day. [262]

24. *Conclusio. Another conclusioun to prove the height of the pool artik fro the orisonte*

Take eny sterre fixe that never discendith under the orisonte in thilke regioun, and considre his heighist altitude and his lowist altitude fro the orisonte, and make a nombre of bothe these altitudes ; take than and abate half that nombre, and take

246. Rubric. *oure cowntre*, M₁ *the cowntre* ; R₂ Br. Th. *oure centur* ; MS. in St. John's Coll. Camb. (*Skeat*) *nostru centri*.

251. *place*, M₁ A₂ B₂ R₁ R₂ Edd. *planete*.

259. In this example MSS. of group β have a different set of observations, viz. 62 for the evening altitude, and 21 for that taken in the morning, giving as a result a latitude about that of Rome.

260. *52 degrees*, roughly the latitude of Oxford ; cp. 270.

263. *make a nombre*, i.e. add them together.

there the elevacioun of the pool artik in that same regioun.

25. *Conclusio. Another conclusioun to prove the latitude of the regioun*

Understonde wel that the latitude of eny place in a regioun is verrey the space bytwex the cenyth of hem that dwellen there and the equinoxial cerce north or south, takyng the mesure in the meridional lyne, as shewith in the almykantera. of thin Astrelabye. And thilke space is as much as the pool artike is high in that same place fro the orizonte. And than is the depressioun of the pool antartik, that is to seyn than is the pool antartike, byneth the orizonte the same quantite of space neither more ne lasse. [266]

Than if thou desire to knowe this latitude of the regioun, take the altitude of the sonne in the myddel of the day, whan the sonne is in the hevedes of Aries or of Libra; for than moeveth the sonne in the lyne equinoxial; and abate the nombre of that same sonnes altitude oute of 90 degrees, and than is the remenaunt of the nombre that leveth the latitude of that regioun. As thus:—I suppose that the sonne is thilke day at noon 38 degrees of height; abate than 38 oute of 90; so leveth there 52; than is 52 degrees the latitude. I say not this but for ensample; for wel I wot the latitude of Oxenford is certeyn minutes lasse as thou might preve. [270]

Now yf so be that the semeth to longe atarieng to abide til that the sonne be in the hevedes of Aries or of Libra, than wayte whan the sonne is in eny othir degre of the zodiak and conside the degre of his declinacioun fro the equinoxial lyne; and if it so be that the sonnes declinacioun be northward fro the equinoxial, abate than fro the sonnes altitude at none the nombre

269. B₁ A₂ B₂ add and 25 minutes after degrees, and read so leveth there 51 degrees and 50 minutes (B₂ 15, A₂ 1), that is (A₂ B₂ omit) the latitude, an evident attempt to make the problem yield the latitude of Oxford exactly.

270. as thou might preve, A₁ A₂ R₁ R₂ Dd₂ Br. Th. omit; M₁ B₁ omit as; M₁ adds the; B₁ adds the same.

of his declinacioun, and than hastow the height of the hevedes of Aries and Libra. [272]

As thus:—My sonne is peraventur in the first degre of Leoun, 58 degrees and 10 minutes of height at none, and his declinacioun is almost 20 degrees northward fro the equinoxial; abate than thilke 20 degrees of declinacioun oute of the altitude at none; than leveth there 38 degrees and odde minutes. Lo there the heved of Aries or Libra and thin equinoxial in that regioun. Also if so be that the sonnes declinacioun be southward fro the equinoxial, adde than thilke declinacioun to the altitude of the sonne at noon, and take there the hevedes of Aries and Libra and thin equinoxial; abate than the height of the equinoxial oute of 90 degrees; than leveth there the distance of the pool of that regioun fro the equinoxial. Or elles, if the list, take the highest altitude fro the equinoxial of eny sterre fixe that thou knowist, and take the netherest elongacioun (lengthing) fro the same equinoxial lyne, and worke in the manere forseid. [277]

26. *Conclusio. Declaracioun of the Ascensioun of signes*

The excellence of the Spere Solide, amonges othir noble conclusiouns, shewith manyfest the diverse ascensiouns of signes in diverse places, as wel in the right cerce as in the embelif cerce. These auctours writen that thilke signe is clepid of right ascensioun with whiche more parte of the cerce equinoxial and lasse part of the zodiak ascendith; and thilke signe ascendith embelif with whiche lasse part of the equinoxial and more part of the zodiak ascendith. Further-over, they seyn that

273. There are two sets of readings for this problem, viz. that of the text found in B₁ (except that it reads, 17 for 10) M₁ Dd₁, and 10 degrees of Leo almost 56 of height at noon . . . declinacioun . . . 18 . . .; abate . . . 18 than leveth 38, found in MSS. of group β (A₂ and B₂ showing contamination with B₁).

278. *Spere Solide*, i.e. the chapter 'De ascensionibus et descensionibus signorum rectis et obliquis' of John de Sacra Bosco's *De Sphaera*, which Chaucer draws on for this conclusion.

in thilke cuntrey where as the senith of hem that dwellen there is in the equinoxial lyne, and her orisonte passyng by the two poles of this world, thilke folke han this right cercle and the right orisonte; and evermore the arch of the day and the arch of the night is there ilike longe; and the sonne twices every yere passing thorough the cennith of her heed, and two someres and two wynters in a yere han these forseide peple. And the almykanteras in her Astrelabyes ben streight as a lyne, so as it shewith in the figure. [284]

The utilite to knowe the ascensions of signes in the right cercle is this:—Truste wel that by mediacioun of thilke ascensions these astrologiens, by her tables and her instrumentes, knowen verreily the ascensioun of every degre and minute in all the zodiak in the embelif cercle as shal be shewed. And *nota* that this forseide right orisonte, that is clepid *Orison Rectum*, dividith the equinoxial in to right angles; and the embelif orisonte, where as the pool is enhaunced up on the orisonte, overkerwith the equinoxial in embelif angles as shewith in the figure. [286]

27. *Conclusio.* *This is the conclusioun to knowe the ascensions of signes in the right cercle, that is circulus directus*

Sette the heved of what signe the lyst to knowe his ascendyng in the right cercle upon the lyne meridional, and wayte where thyn almyry touchith the bordure, and sette there a prikke; turne than thy riet westward til that the ende of the forseide signe sitte upon the meridional lyne and eftesonys wayte where thinalmyry touchith the bordure, and sette there apother prikke. Rekene than the nombre of degres in the bordure bitwixe both prikkes, and take the ascensioun of the signe in the right

286. *overkerwith*, A₂ B₂ (var.) *overkeuereth*; Edd. *overcomith*.

287. *his ascendyng*, A₁ A₂ B₂ R₂ Br. *the ascendyng*.

287. *and sette ther a prikke*. Following this to end of conclusion B₁ has a different version, no traces of which are found in other MSS.

cercle. And thus maist thou werke with every porcioun of thy zodiak. [289]

28. *Conclusio.* *To knowe the ascensions of signes in the embelif cercle in every region, I mene, in circulo obliquo*

Sette the heved of the signe whiche as the list to knowe his ascensioun upon the est orisonte, and wayte where thyn almyry touchith the bordure, and there sette a prikke. Turne than thy riet upward til that the ende of the same signe sitte upon the est orisonte, and wayte efte sonys where as thyn almyry touchith the bordure, and sette there a nother prikke. Rekene than the nombre of degres in the bordur bitwyxe bothe prikkes and take there the ascensioun of the signe in the embelif cercle. And understonde wel that alle the signes in thy zodiak, fro the heved of Aries unto the ende of Virgo, ben clepid Signes of the North fro the equinoxial. And these signes arisen bitwyxe the verrey est and the verrey northe in oure orisonte generally for evere. [291] And alle the signes fro the heved of Libra unto the ende of Pisces ben clepid Signes of the South fro the equinoxial; and these signes arisen evermore bitwixe the verrey est and the verrey south in oure orisonte. Also every signe bitwixe the heved of Capricorne unto the ende of Geminis arisith on oure orisonte in lasse than 2 houres equales. And these same signes fro the heved of Capricorne unto the ende of Geminis ben cleped Tortuose Signes, or Croked Signes, for they arise embelyf on oure orisonte. And these croked signes ben obedient to the signes that ben of right ascensioun. The signes of right ascencioun ben fro the heved of Cancer unto the [end] of Sagittarie; and these signes arisen more upright, and they ben called eke Sovereyn Signes and everiche of hem arisith in more space than in 2 houres. Of whiche signes Gemini obeith to Cancer, and Taurus to

299. *unto the end of Sagittarie*. B₂ is the only MSS. that has reading in text. Others *heved for end*.

Leo, Aries to Virgo, Pisces to Libra, Aquarius to Scorpioun, and Capricorne to Sagittarie. And thus evermore 2 signes that ben ilike fer fro the heved of Capricorne obeyen everiche of hem til othir. [301]

29. *Conclusio. To knowe iustly the 4 quarters of the worlde, as Est, West, North, and South*

Take the altitude of thy sonne whan the list, and note wel the quarter of the worlde in which the sonne is for the tyme by the azymutes. Turne than thin Astrelabic, and sette the degre of the sonne in the almykanteras of his altitude on thilke syde that the sonne stant, as is the manere in takyng of houres, and ley thy label on the degre of the sonne; and rekene how many degrees of the bordure ben bitwexe the lyne meridional and the point of thy label, and note wel that nombre; turne than ageyn thin Astrelabic, and sette the point of thy gret rule there thou takist thin altitudes upon as many degrees in his bordure fro his meridional as was the point of thy label fro the lyne meridional on the wombe side. Take than thin Astrelabic with bothe hondes sadly and slyly, and lat the sonne shyne thorough bothe holes of thy rule, and slyly in thilke shynying lat thin Astrelabic kouche adoun evene upon a smothe grounde, and than wol the verrey lyne meridional of thin Astrelabic lye evene south, and the est lyne wol lye est, and the west lyne west, and the northe lyne north, so that thou wirke softly and avysely in the kouching. And thus hast thou the 4 quarters of the firmament. [308]

30. *Conclusio. To knowe the altitude of planetes fro the weye of the sonne whethir so they be north or south fro the forseide weye*

Loke whan that a planete is in the lyne meridional, yf that hir altitude be of the

same height that is the degre of the sonne for that day, and than is the planete in the verrey wey of the sonne and hath no latitude. And if the altitude of the planete be heigher than the degre of the sonne, than is the planete north fro the wey of the sonne suche a quantite of latitude as shewith by thin almykanteras. And if the altitude of the planete be lasse than the degre of the sonne, than is the planete south fro the wey of the sonne suche a quantite of latitude as shewith by thin almykanteras. This is to seyn fro the wey where as the sonne went thilke day, but not fro the wey of the sonne in every place of the zodiak. [312]

31. *Conclusio. To knowe the Cenyth of the arising of the sonne, this is to seyn the partie of the orisonte in whiche that the sonne arisith*

Thou must first considere that the sonne arisith not alwey verrey est, but somtyme by northe the est and somtyme by south the est. Sothly the sonne arisith nevere moo verrey est in oure orisonte, but he be in the heved of Aries or Libra. Now is thin orisonte departed in 24 parties by thin azimutes in significacioun of 24 parties of the world; al be it so that shipmen rekene thilke parties in 32. Than is there no more but wayte in whiche azimutz that thy sonne entrith at his arisyng, and take there the cenith of the arisyng of the sonne. [316]

The manere of the divisioun of thin Astrelabic is this, I mene as in this cas:—First it is divided in 4 places principalis with the lyne that goth from est to west; and than with a nother lyne that goth fro south to north; than is it divided in smale parties of azimutz, as est, and est by south,

309. Chaucer in 312 explains *wey of the sonne* to mean the sun's apparent path on any given day.

312. After *zodiak* group B adds for on the *morow*: *wyl the sonne be on another degre.*

313. Rubric. *Cenyth*, azimuth.

314. *nevere moo*, A₁ B₂ *evermore*.

315. As in the mariner's compass.

where as is the first azymute above the est lyne; and so furthe fro partie to partie til that thou come ageyn un to the est lyne. Thus maist thou understonde also the cenyth of eny sterre in whiche partie he riseth. [319]

32. Conclusio. To knowe in whiche partie of the firmament is the conjuncceyoun

Considere the tyme of the conjuncceyoun by the kalender, as thus:—Loke hou many houres thilke conjuncceioun is fro the mid-day of the day precedent, as shewith by the canoun of thy kalender. Rekeue than thilke nombre of houres in the bordure of thin Astrelabie, as thou art wont to do in knowyng of the houres of the day or of the nyght, and ley thy label over the degre of the sonne, and than wol the point of thy label sitte upon the houre of the conjuncceioun. Loke than in whiche azymute the degre of thy sonne sittith, and in that partie of the firmament is the conjuncceioun. [322]

33. Conclusio. To knowe the cenyth of the altitude of the sonne

This is no more to seyn but eny tyme of the day take the altitude of the sonne, and by the azymut in whiche he stondith maist thou seen in whiche partie of the firmament he is. And the same wise maist thou seen by night of eny sterre, whether the sterre sitte est or west, or north or southe, or eny partie bitwene, after the name of the azimute in whiche the sterre stondith. [324]

34. Conclusio. To knowe sothly the degre of the longitude of the mone, or of eny planete that hath no latitude for the tyme fro the eliptik lyne

Take the altitude of the mone, and rekne thy altitude up amonge thyn almykanteras on whiche syde that the mone

318. *above the est lyne.* Because the points of the compass were reversed on the Astrolabe.

323. *eny tyme, M₂ R₂ on tyme.*

325. *altitude of the mone, A₂ B₂ latitude of the mone.*

stondith, and sette there a prikke. Take than anon right upon the mones syde the altitude of any sterre fixe whiche that thou knowist, and sett his centre upon his altitude amonge thyn almykanteras there the sterre is founde. Wayte than whiche degre of the zodiak touchith the prykke of the altitude of the mone, and take there the degre in whiche the mone stondith. This conclusioun is verrey sothe, yf the sterres in thin Astrelabie stonden after the trouthe. Comoun tretres of the Astrelabie ne maken non excepcioun whether the mone have latitude or noon, ne on wheyther syde of the mone the altitude of the sterre fixe be taken.

And nota that yf the mone shewe himself by light of day, than maist thou wyrke this same conclusioun by the sonne, as wel as by the fixe sterre. [330]

35. Conclusio. This is the wyrkyng of the conclusioun to knowe yf that eny planete be directe or retrograde

Take the altitude of any sterre that is clepid a planete, and note it wel; and take eke anon the altitude of any sterre fixe that thou knowist, and note it wel also. Come than ageyn the thriddle or the ferthe nyght next folowing, for than shalt thou perceyve wel the moeving of a planete, whether so he moeve forward or bakward. Awayte wel than whan that thy sterre fixe is in the same altitude that she was whan thou toke hir firste altitude. And take than eft sones the altitude of the forseide planete and note it wel; for truste wel yf so be that the planete be on the right syde of the meridional lyne, so that his secunde altitude be lasse than hys first altitude was, than is the planete directe; and yf he be on the west syde in that condicioun, than is he retrograde. And yf so be that this planete be upon the est side whan his altitude is taken, so that his secunde altitude be more than his first altitude, than is he retrograde. And if he be on the west syde, than is he direct. But the contrarie of these parties is of

the cours of the mone ; for certis the mone moeveth the contrarie from othre planetes as in hir epicicle, but in noon othir manere. [337]

36. *Conclusio. The conclusioun of equaciouns of houses after the Astrelabie*

Sette the begynnynge of the degre that ascendith upon the ende of the 8 houre unequal, than wol the begynnynge of the 2 hous sitte upon the lyne of mydnight. Remove than the degre that ascendith, and sette him on the ende of the 10 houre unequal, and than wol the begynnynge of the 3 hous sitte up on the mydnight lyne. Bring up ageyn the same degre that ascended first, and sette him upon the est orisonte, and than wol the begynnynge of the 4 hous sitte upon the lyne of mydnight. Take than the nader of the degre that first ascendid, and sette him in the ende of the 2 houre unequal ; and than wol the begynnynge of the 5 hous sitte upon the lyne of mydnight. Sette than the nader of the ascendent in the ende of the 4 houre unequal, and than wol the begynnynge of the 6 hous sitte on the mydnight lyne. The begynnynge of the 7 hous is nader of the ascendent, and the begynnynge of the 8 hous is nader of the 2 hous, and the begynnynge of the 9 hous is nader of the 3, and the begynnynge of the 10 hous is nader of the 4, and the begynnynge of the 11 hous is nader of the 5, and the begynnynge of the 12 hous is nader of the 6. [343]

37. *Conclusio. Another maner of equaciouns of houses by the Astrelabie*

Take thin ascendent, and than hast thou thy 4 angles ; for wel thou wost that

337. *certis*, R₁ *sothly* ; M₁ Dd₁ *he settes* ; A₂ omits.

338. After conclusion 35 the MSS. vary. The text represents MSS. B₁ M₁ Dd₁ R₁. R₂ ends with conclusion 35; B₂ with 36. Of the other MSS. some insert a number of spurious conclusions between 35 and 36 ; others place them after conclusion 40. The evidence that these are spurious is found in the fact that (a) they occur only in late MSS., and (b) are in a style quite different from Chaucer's.

the opposite of thin ascendent, that is to seyn, the begynnynge of the 7 hous, sitt upon the west orisonte, and the begynnynge of the 10 hous sitt upon the lyne meridional, and his opposyt upon the lyne of mydnight. Than ley thy label over the degre that ascendith, and rekne fro the point of thy label alle the degrees in the bordure tyl thou come to the meridional lyne ; and departe alle thilke degrees in 3 evene parties, and take there the evne equacions of 3 houses ; for ley thy label over everiche of these 3 parties, and than maist thou se by [ther] thy label lith in the zodiak, the begynnynge of everiche of these same houses fro the ascendent ; that is to seyn the begynnynge of the 12 hous next above thin ascendent, the begynnynge of the 11 hous, and than the 10 upon the meridional lyne, as I first seide. The same wise wirke thou fro the ascendent down to the lyne of mydnyght, and thus hast thou othre 3 houses ; that is to seyn, the begynnynge of the 2, and the 3, and the 4 hous. Than is the nader of these 3 houses the begynnynge of the 3 houses that folewen. [350]

38. *Conclusio. To fynde the lyne meridional to dwelle fixe in evy certeyn place*

Take a rounde plate of metal, for werpyng the brodder the better ; and make there upon a just compas a lite with in the bordure. And ley this rounde plate upon an evne grounde, or on an evne ston, or on an evne stok fixe in the grounde ; and ley it evne by a level. And in the centre of the compas styke an evne pyn, or a wyre, upright, the smaller the better ; sette thy pyn by a plom-rule evne upright, and lete thy pyn be no longer than a quarter of the dyametre of thy compas, fro the centre a-middes. And wayte bisely about 10 or 11 of the klokke, whan the sonne shineth, whan the shadewe of the pyn entrih any thyng with in the cercle

348. *same*, M₂ 12 ; R₁ 3.

351. *a just compas*, an exact circle.

353. *the centre a-middes*, R₁ *the pyn*.

of thy compas an heer mele; and marke there a pricke with inke. Abide than stille waityng on the sonne til after 1 of the klokke, til that the shadwe of the wyre, or of the pyn, passe any thing oute of the cercele of the compas, be it nevere so lyte, and sette there another pricke of ynke. Take than a compas, and mesure evene the myddel bitwexe bothe prickes, and sette there a prikke. Take me than a rule and drawe a strike evene a-lyne, fro the pyn unto the middel prikke; and take there thi lyne meridional for evermore as in that same place. And yif thou drawe a crosse lyne over-thwart the compas justly over the lyne meridional, than hast thou est and west and south, and par consequens, the opposite of the southe lyne is the northe. [358]

39. *Conclusio. The Description of the meridional lyne, of longitudes and latitudes of Citees and Townes, as wel as of Climates*

Thys lyne meridional is but a manere descripcioun, or lyne ymaged, that passith upon the poles of this world and by the cenyth of oure heved. And it is cleped the lyne meridional, for in what place that any man ys at any tyme of the yere, whan that the sonne, by mevyng of the firmament, cometh to his verrey meridional place, than is it verrey mydday, that we clepen oure none, as to thilke man. And therefore is it cleped the lyne of mydday.

And *nota* that evermore of any 2 cytes or 2 townes, of which that oo town approachith neer the est than doth that othir town, truste wel that thilke townes han diverse meridians. [362]

Nota also that the arch of the equinoxial that is contened or bownded bitwixe the 2 meridians is clepid the longitude of the

toun. And yf so be that two townes have ilike meridian or oon meridian, than is the distaunce of hem both ilike fer fro the est, and the contrarie; and in this manere thei change not her meridian. But sothly thei chaungen her almykanteras, for the enhaunsyng of the pool and the distance of the sonne. [365]

The longitude of a climat is a lyne ymaged fro est to west ilike distant fro the equinoxiall. And the latitude of a climat may be cleped the space of the erthe fro the begynnyng of the first clymat unto the verrey ende of the same clymat evene direct ageyns the pool artyke. Thus sayn somme auctours; and somme of hem sayn that yf men clepe the latitude of a cuntrey the arch meridian that is contened or intercept bitwix the cenyth and the equinoxial, than say they that the distance fro the equinoxial unto the ende of a climat evene ageynst the pool artik is the latitude of a clymat forsoothe. [368]

40. *Conclusio. To knowe with whiche degre of the zodiak that any planete ascendith on the orisonte, whether so that his latitude be north or south*

Knowe by thin almenak the degre of the ecliptik of any signe in whiche that the planete is reckned forto be, and that is clepid the degre of his longitude. And knowe also the degre of his latitude fro the ecliptik north or southe. And by these ensamples folowynge in special maist thou wirke forsothe in every signe of the zodiak: — [371]

The degre of the longitude peraventure of Venus or of a nother planete was 6 of Capricorne, and the latitude of hir was northward 4 degres fro the ecliptik lyne. Than toke I a subtil compas, and clepid that oo point of my compas A, and that other point F. Than toke I the point of

366. *evene direct*, etc., 'versus polum articum.'

371. Dd1 has different set of figures (in R1 the figures have not been filled in), giving longitude 6 and latitude 2. In M1 not all figures filled in.

372. 6 of Capricorne, B1 1 degree of Capricorne; R1 of Capricorne (in R1 the figures have not been filled in); M1 *planete*.

359. From this point P1 is copied from a MS. like M1 Dd1. The readings of all three are very poor; so that for the remaining conclusions the text is that of P1 collated with R1.

359. Conclusio 39 is taken largely from Sacrobosco.

A and sette it in the ecliptik lyne in my zodiak in the degre of the longitude of Venus, that is to seyn, in the 1 degre of Capricorne; and than sette I the point of F upward in the same signe by cause that latitude was north upon the latitude of Venus, that is to seyn, in the 4 degre fro the heved of Capricorne; and thus have 4 degrees bitwixe my two prickses. Than leide I down softly my compas, and sette the degre of the longitude upon the orisonte; tho toke I and waxed my label in manere of a peire tables to receyve distinctly the prickses of my compas. [376] Tho toke I thys forseide label, and leyde it fixe over the degre of my longitude; tho toke I up my compas and sette the point of A in the waxe on my label, as evene as I koude gesse, over the ecliptik lyne in the ende of the longitude, and sette the point of F endelonge in my label upon the space of the latitude, inward and over the zodiak, that is to seyn northward fro the ecliptik. Than leide I doun my compas, and loked wel in the wey upon the prickses of A and of F; tho turned I my ryet til that the pricke of F satt upon the orisonte; than sawe I wel that the body of Venus in hir latitude of degrees septemtrionals ascendid in the ende of the 8 degre fro the heved of Capricorne.

And *nota* that in this manere maist thou wirke with any latitude septemtrional in alle signes. But sothly the latitude meridional of a planete in Capricorne ne may not be take by cause of the litel space bitwixe the ecliptyk and the bordure of the Astrelabie; but sothely in all othre signes it may. [382]

375. 4 degrees, Dd₁ 2 degrees.

381. 8 degre fro, Dd₁ 6 degre in.

2 pars hujus conclusio

Also the degre peraventure of Iupiter, or of a nother planete, was in the first degre of Piscis in longitude, and his latitude was 2 degrees meridional; tho toke I the point of A and sette it in the first degre of Piscis on the ecliptike; and than sette I the point of F downward in the same signe by cause that the latitude was south 2 degres, that is to seyn, fro the heved of Piscis; and thus have 2 degres bitwexe bothe prikkes. Than sette I the degre of the longitude upon the orisonte; tho toke I my label, and leide it fixe upon the degre of the longitude; tho sette I the point of A on my label evene over the ecliptik lyne in the ende of the degre of the longitude, and sette the point of F endlonge in my label the space of 2 degres of the latitude outward fro the zodiak (this is to seyn southward fro the ecliptik toward the bordure), and turned my riet til that the pricke of F saat upon the orisonte. Than say I wel that the body of Iupiter in his latitude of 2 degres meridional ascendid with 8 degres of Piscis *in horoscopo*. And in this manere maist thou wirke with any latitude meridional, as I first seide, save in Capricorne. And yf thou wilt pleye this crafte with the arisyng of the mone, loke thou rekne wel hir cours houre by houre, for she ne dwellith not in a degre of his longitude but litel while, as thou wel knowist. But natheles yf thou rekne hir verrey moevyng by thy tables houre after houre— [391]

(Left unfinished.)

383. 2 degrees, Dd₁ 3 degrees. Similarly in 384, 386, 388 (M₁ agrees with B₁).

388. 8 degres, Dd₁ 14 degrees; M₁ 6 degrees.

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE

MANY men sayn that in sweveninges
 Ther nys but fables and lesynges ;
 But men may some swevenes sene
 Whiche hardely that false ne bene,
 But afterwarde ben apparaunt.
 This maye I drawe to warraunt
 An authour that hight Macrobes,
 That halte nat dremes false ne lees,
 But undoe the us the avysioun
 That whilom mette kyng Cipiou. 10
 And who-so saith, or weneth it be
 A jape, or ellis nycete,
 To wene that dremes after falle,
 Lette who so lyste a fole me calle.
 For this trowe I, and say for me,
 That dremes signifiante be
 Of good and harme to many wightes,
 That dremen in her slepe a nyghtes
 Ful many thynges covertly,
 That fallen after al openly. 20

Within my twenty yere of age,
 Whan that Love taketh his cariage
 Of yongé folke, I wente soone
 To bedde, as I was wont to done,
 And faste I slepte ; and in slepyng
 Me mette suche a swevenyng
 That lykéd me wonder wele.
 But in that sweven is never a dele
 That it nys afterwarde befallé,
 Ryght as this dreame wol tel us alle. 30

Nowe this dreame wol I ryme a-right.
 To make your hertés gaye and lyght,
 For Love it prayeth and also
 Commaundeth me that it be so.
 And if there any aské me,
 Whether that it be he or she,

1. For vv. 1-44 Thynne's edition is sole authority.

4. *that false, ? to falseen ben, 'mensongier.'*

7. *Macrobes*, cp. *Dethe of Blaunche*, l. 284, note.

12. *Th. els.*

22. *cariage* (*Th. corage*), i.e. toll, 'pagee.'

Howe [wil I] this booke whiche is here
 Shal hatté, that I rede you here ;
 It is the Romance of the Rose,
 In whiche al the Arte of Love I close. 40

The mater fayre is of to make :
 God graunt me in gree that she it take
 For whom that it begonnen is !
 And that is she that hath y-wis
 So mochel pris, and therto she
 So worthy is bilowed to be
 That she wel ought of pris and ryght
 Be cleped Rose of every wight.

That it was May me thoughté tho—
 It is .V. yere or more ago— 50
 That it was May thus dreméd me,
 In tyme of love and jolite,
 That al thing gynneth waxen gay.
 For ther is neither busk nor hay
 In May that it nyl shrouded bene,
 And it with newé levés wrene.
 These wodés cek recoveren grene
 That drie in wynter ben to sene.
 And the erthe wexith proude withalle
 For swoté dewes that on it falle, 60
 And [al] the pore estat forgette
 In which that wynter had it sette.

And than bycometh the ground so proude,
 That it wole have a newé shroude,
 And makith so queynt his robe and faire
 That it hath hewes an hundred payre,
 Of gras and flouris, ynde and pers,
 And many hewés ful dyvers.

That is the robe I mene, y-wis, 69
 Through whiche the ground to preisen is.

The byrdés that han lefte her song
 While thei suffridé cold so strong,
 In wedres gryl and derk to sight,

37. *wil I*, supplied from Fr. 'ge voil.'

61. *al*, supplied by Skeat ; but perhaps *povre*.

66. *hath*, MSS. *had*.

71. MS., which is imperfect in vv. 69-72, . . . *en*.

72. *Th. han suffred*.

Ben in May, for the sonnè bright,
 So glade that they shewe in syngyng,
 That in her hertis is sich lykynge,
 That they mote syngen and be light.
 Than doth the nyghtyngale hir myght
 To makè noyse and syngen blythe;
 Thán is blisful many siþe
 The chelaundre and [the] papyngay. 80
 Than yongé folk entenden ay
 Forto ben gay and amorous.
 The tyme is than so saverous,
 Hard is the hert that loveth nought
 In May, whan al this mirth is wrought;
 Whan he may on these braunches here
 The smalé briddés syngen clere
 Her blesful sweté song pitous.
 And in this sesoun delytous, 90
 Whan love affraieth allé thing,
 Me thoughte a-nyght, in my sleping
 Right in my bed, ful redily
 That it was by the morowe erly,
 And up I roos, and gan me clothe.
 Anoon I wisshe myn hondis bothe.
 A sylvre nedle forth y droughe
 Out of an aguler queynt ynoughe,
 And gan this nedlé threde anon;
 For out of toun me list to gon 100
 The song of briddés forto here,
 That in thise buskés syngen clere.
 And in the swete seson that lefe is,
 With a threde bastyng my slevis,
 Alone I wente in my plaiyng,
 The smalé foulés song harknyng,
 That peynéd hem ful many peyre
 To syng on bowés blosméd feyre.
 Iolyf and gay, ful of gladnesse,
 Toward a ryver gan I me dresse, 110
 That I herd renné fasté by,
 For fairer plaiyng non saugh I
 Than playen me by that ryvere.
 For from an hill that stood ther nere,
 Cam down the streme ful stif and hold;
 Cleer was the water and as cold

As any welle is, soth to seyne.
 And somdele lasse it was than Seyne,
 But it was strayghter, wel away;
 And never saugh I, er that day, 120
 The watir that so wel lykéd me,
 And wondir glad was I to se
 That lusty place and that ryvere.
 And with that watir that ran so clere
 My face I wysshe. 'Tho saugh I well
 The botmè pavéd everydell
 With gravel ful of stonés shene.
 The medewe softé, swote, and grene,
 Bét right on the watir syde.
 Ful clere was than the morowtyde, 130
 And ful attempre, out of drede.
 'Tho gan I walké thorough the mede,
 Dounward ay in my pleiying
 The ryver sylé costeiying.
 And whan I had a whilé goon,
 I saugh a gardyn right anoon,
 Ful long and brood, and euerydell
 Encloséd was, and walléd well
 With highé wallés enbatailléd, 140
 Portraied without and wel entailléd
 With many riché portraitures.
 And bothe the ymages and peyntures
 Gan I biholdé bysyly;
 And I wole telle you redyly
 Of thilk ymagés the semblaunce,
 As fer as I have remembraunce.
 Amyddé saugh I HATÉ stonde,
 That for hir wrathé, yre, and onde
 Semede to ben a meveresse,
 An angry wight, a chideresse; 150
 And ful of gyle and felle corage
 By semblaunt was that ilk ymage.
 And she was no thyng wel arraied,
 But lyk a wode womman afraied.
 Y-frounced foule was hir visage
 And grennyng for dispitous rage;
 Hir nosé snorted up for tene.
 Ful hidous was she forto sene,
 Ful foule and rusty was she this;

76. *Th. herte.*81. *chelaundre*, a kind of lark.84. *saverous*, Fr. 'saverious,' G *faverous*.91. *affraicth*, arouses; cp. *B. of D.* 296.103. As in *Thynne*; MS. *And in* [erasure] *swete seson tha[swete over erasure] is.* The Fr. is 'En icele saison novele,' which makes one suspect that *And in that sesoun that newe* is was the original form of the line.119. *strayghter*, 'espandue.'142. *G the peyntures.*146. *G in remembraunce.*149. *meveresse*, MSS. *mynoresse*; Fr. 'moverresse,' fem. of *mouveau*, 'a troublesome fellow' (Cotgr.).

159. A similar repetition of subject in v. 880.

Hir heed y-writhen was, y-wis, 160
 Ful grymly with a greet towayle.
 An ymage of another entayle
 A lyft half was hir fastè by ;
 Hir name above hir heed saugh I,
 And she was callèd FELONYE.
 Another ymagè, that VILANYE
 Y-clepid was, saugh I and fonde
 Upon the wal on hir right honde.
 Vilany was lyk somdel
 That other ymage, and, trustith wel, 170
 She semede a wikked créature.
 By countenance in portrayture
 She semèd be ful dispitous,
 And eek ful proude and outrageous.
 Wel coude he peynte, I undirtake,
 That sich ymagè coude make.
 Ful foule and cherlysshe semèd she,
 And eek vylayneus forto be,
 And litel coude of norriture
 To worshiþe any créature. 180
 And next was peynted COVEITISE,
 That eggith folk in many gise
 To take and yeve right nought ageyne,
 And gret tresouris up to icyne.
 And that is she that for usure
 Leneth to many a créature,
 The lassè for the more wynnynge,
 So coveteise is her brennyng.
 And that is she for penyes fele,
 That techith forto robbe and stele 190
 These thevès and these smale harlotes ;
 And that is routh, for by her throtes
 Ful many oon hangith at the laste.
 She makith folk compasse and caste
 To taken other folkis thyng
 Through robberie or myscounting.
 And that is she that makith trechoures
 And she makith falsè pleadoures,
 That, with hir termès and hir domes,
 Doon maydens, children, and eek gromes
 Her heritagè to forgo. 201
 Ful croked were hir hondis two,
 For coveitise is evere wode
 To gripen other folkis gode ;

Coveityse for hir wynnynge
 Ful leef hath other mennès thing.
 Another ymage set saugh I
 Next Coveitise fastè by,
 And she was clepid AVARICE.
 Ful foule in peynting was that vice, 210
 Ful fade and caytif was she eek,
 And also grene as ony leek.
 So yvel hewed was hir colour
 Hir semed to have lyved in langour ;
 She was lyk thyng for hungrè deed,
 That ladde hir lyf oonly by breed
 Knenen with eisel strong and egre ;
 And therto she was lene and megre.
 And she was clad ful porèly
 Al in an old torn courtèpy, 220
 As she were al with doggis torne ;
 And both bihynde and eke biforne
 Clouted was she beggarly.
 A mantyl henge hir fastè by,
 Upon a perchè weike and small ;
 A burnet cote henge therewith-all,
 Furrèd with no menyvere
 But with a furrè rough of here,
 Of lambè skynnès hevye and blake ;
 It was ful old I undirtake, 230
 For Avarice to clothe hir well
 Ne hastith hir neveradell.
 For certeynly it were hir loth
 To weren ofte that ilkè cloth ;
 And if it were forwerdè she
 Wolde have ful gret necessite
 Of clothyng, er she bought hir newe,
 Al were it bad of woll and hewe.
 This Avarice hilde in hir hande
 A purs that henge [doun] by a bande, 240
 And that she hidde and bonde so
 strong,
 Men must abyde wondir long,
 Out of that purs er the come ought ;
 For that ne cometh not in hir thought.
 It was not, certein, hir entent
 That fro that purs a peny went.
 And by that ymage nygh ynough

166. Another ymage, etc. ; cp. 162, 170, 207.

179. MSS. *noriture*.

185. G omits *she*.

188. *coveteise*, Th. *covetous*.

196. *myscounting*, 'mesconter,' Kaluza's
 emendation for *myscoueiting* of MSS.

208. MSS. *fastè by*, also in 224, and frequently.

211. MSS. *sad*, but Fr. 'megre' ; cp. 311, where it translates *megre*.

212. *also*, just as.

220. Th. omits *old* ; Fr. 'vies et desrumpue.'

240. Perhaps *hengde*.

Was peynted ENVYE, that never lough,
 Nor never wel in hir herte ferde,
 But if she outhur saugh or herde 250
 Som gret myschaunce, or gret disese.
 Nô thyng may so moch hir plese
 As myschef and mysaventure ;
 Or whan she seeth discomfiture
 Upon ony worthy man falle,
 That likith hir wel with alle.
 She is ful glade in hir corage,
 If she se any grete lynage
 Be brought to nought in shamful wise.
 And if a man in honour rise, 260
 Or by his witte or by his prowessse,
 Of that hath she gret hevynesse.
 For trustith wel she goth nygh wode,
 Whan any chaungè happith gode.
 Envie is of such crueltee
 That feith ne trouth[è] holdith she
 To freend ne felawè, bad or good.
 Ne she hath kynne noon of hir blood,
 That she nys ful her enemye ;
 She nolde, I dar seyn hardelye, 270
 Hir ownè fadir ferdè well.
 And sore abieth she everydell
 Hir malice and hir male talent,
 For she is in so gret turment
 And hath such [wo] whan folk doth good,
 That nygh she melith for pure wood ;
 Hir hertè kervyth and so brekith,
 That god the puple wel a-wrekith.
 Envie, i-wis, shal nevere lette
 Som blame upon the folk to sette ; 280
 I trowe that if Envie, i-wis,
 Knewe the bestè man that is
 On this side, or byyonde the see,
 Yit somewhat lakken hym wolde she ;
 And if he were so hende and wis,
 That she ne myght al abate his pris,
 Yit wolde she blame his worthynesse,
 Or by hir wordis make it lesse.
 I saugh Envie in that peyntyng
 Hádde a wondirful lokyng, 290
 For she ne lokidè but awrie,

248. Kaluza reads *peynthe* to avoid slurring *envye*, but *peynted* is the form in ll. 301, 349, 450, 807, 935.

256. MSS. *Than*, but Fr. 'Ice.' If anything is to be added to the verse, it should be *to se* after *wel*; Fr. 'a veoir.'

266. *ne*, MSS. omit.

275. *wo*, supplied from Fr.

Or overthart all baggyngly.
 And she hadde a foule usage,
 SHe myght loke in no visage
 Of man or womman forth-right pleyn,
 But shette hir one eye for disdeyn ;
 So for Enviè brenné she,
 Whan she myght any man y-se
 That faire or worthi were, or wise,
 Or ellès stode in folkis pryse. 300

SORWÈ was peynted next Envie
 Upon that wall of masonrye,
 But wel was seyn in hir colour
 That she hadde lyvèd in langour ;
 Hir semède to havè the jaunye.
 Nought half so pale was Avarice,
 Nor no thyng lyk [as] of lenesse ;
 For sorowè, thought, and gret distresse,
 That she hadde suffred day and nyght,
 Made hir ful yolwe and no thyng bright,
 Ful fadè, pale, and megre also. 311
 Was never wight yit half so wo
 As that hir semède forto be,
 Nor so fulfilled of ire as she.
 I trowe that no wight myght hir please,
 Nor do that thyng that myght hir ease ;
 Nor she ne wolde hir sorowè slake
 Nor comfort noon unto hir take,
 So depè was hir wo bigonnen
 And eek hir hert in angre ronnen. 320
 A sorowful thyng wel semèd she,
 Nor she hadde no thyng slowè be
 Forto forcracchen al hir facc,
 And forto rent in many place
 Hir clothis, and forto tere hir swire,
 As she that was fulfilled of ire.
 And al to-torn lay eek hir here
 Aboute hir shuldris here and there,
 As she that hadde it al to-rent
 For angre, and for maltalent. 330
 And eek I telle you certeinly
 How that she wepe ful tendirly.
 In worlde nys wyght so harde of herte
 That had [he] sene her sorowes smerte,
 That nolde have had of her pyte,

292. *baggyngly*, 'borgnoiant' (Cotgr. 'to loure'); cp. *B. of D.* v. 623.

296. *one eye*, MS. *rien*; Fr. 'un œil.'

298. *y-se*, MSS. *se*; cp. 1401.

305. Either omit *to*, or read *to have* as two syllables.

325. *swire*, throat; nothing in Fr. corresponding.

So wo begone a thyng was she.
 She al to-dassht her-selfe for woo,
 And smote togyder her hondès two.
 To sorowe was she ful ententyfe
 That woful rechêlesse caytyfe ;
 Her roughtè lytel of playing
 Or of clypping, or [of] kissing ;
 For who so sorouful is in herte,
 Him lustè not to play ne sterte,
 Ne for to dauncen, ne to synge,
 Ne may his herte in temper bringe,
 To makè joye on even or morowe,
 For joy is contrarie unto sorowe.

ELDE was paynted after this,
 That shorter was a foote, i-wys,
 Than she was wonte in her yonghede.
 Unneth her selfe she mightè fede ;
 So feble and eke so olde was she
 That faded was al her beaute.
 Ful salowe was waxen her colour ;
 Her heed for hore was whyte as flour,
 I-wys great qualme ne were it none,
 Ne synne, al though her lyfe were gone ;
 Al woxen was her body unwelde,
 And drie and dwynéd al for elde.
 A foule forwelkéd thyng was she,
 That whylom rounde and softe had be ;
 Her eerès shoken faste withall,
 As from her heed they woldè fall ;
 Her facè frouncéd and forpyned,
 And bothe her hondès lorne, fordwyned.
 So olde she was that she ne went
 A foote, but it were by potent.
 The tyme that passeth nyght and daye,
 And restêlesse travayleth aye,
 And steleth from us so prively,
 That to us semeth so sykerly
 That it in one poynt dwelleth ever ;
 And certes it ne resteth never,
 But gothe so faste, and passeth aye,
 That there nys man that thynkè may
 What tymè that nowe present is ;
 Asketh at these clerkès this.
 For [or] men thynke it redily
 Thre tymès ben y-passed by.
 The tymè that may not sojourne,

But goth and may never retourne,
 As watir that doun renneth ay,
 But never drope retournè may.
 Ther may no thing as tyme endure,
 Metall nor erthely créature ;
 For allè thing it frette and shall.
 The tyme eke that chaungith all,
 And all doth waxe and fostred be,
 And allè thing distroieti he ;
 The tyme that eldith our auncessours,
 And eldith kynges and emperours,
 And that us alle shal overcomen
 Er that deth us shal have nomen ;
 The tyme, that hath al in welde
 To elden folk, had maad hir elde
 So ynly, that to my witing,
 She myght[è] helpe hir silf no thing,
 But turned ageyn unto childhede.
 She had no thing hir silf to lede,
 Ne witte ne pithè in hir holde
 More than a child of two yeer olde.
 But nathêles I trowe that she
 Was faire sumtyme, and fresh to se,
 Whan she was in hir rightful age ;
 But she was past al that passage,
 And was a doted thing bicomen.
 A furréd cope on had she nomen,
 Wel had she clad hir silf and warme,
 For colde nyght ellès don hir harme.
 These oldè folk have alwey colde,
 Her kynde is sich whan they ben
 olde.

Another thing was don there write,
 That semède lyk an ipocrite,
 And it was clepid POORE HOLY.
 That ilk is she that prively
 Ne spareth never a wikked dede
 Whan men of hir taken noon hede.
 And maketh hir outward precious
 With palé visage and pitous,
 And semeth a simple créature.
 But ther nys no mysaventure
 That she ne thenkith in hir corage.
 Ful lyk to hir was that ymage,
 That makid was lyk hir semblaunce.
 She was ful symple of countenance
 And she was clothéd and eke shod
 As she were, for the love of god,

348. Perhaps read *contraire* ; cp. 991.

368. by *potent*, with a crutch.

380. i.e. three moments are gone while one is thinking about it.

401. in *hir holde*, in her possession.

413. *don there write*, 'empress (après ?) escrete.

Yolden to relygioun,
 Sich semède hir devocioun. 430
 A sauter helde she faste in honde,
 And bisily she gan to fonde
 To makè many a feynt praire
 To god, and to his seyntis dere.
 Ne she was gay, ne fresh, ne jolyf,
 But semede to be ful ententyf
 To gode werkis and to faire,
 And therto she had on an haire ;
 Ne certis she was fatt no thing,
 But semed wery for fasting ; 440
 Of colour pale and deed was she.
 From hir the gate ay wernèd be
 Of Paradys, that blisful place.
 For sich folk maketh lene her face,
 As Crist seith in his Evangile,
 To getè prys in toun a while ;
 And for a litel glorie veigne
 They lesen god and ek his reigne.
 And alderlast of everychon
 Was peynted POVERT al aboon, 450
 That not a peny hadde in holde,
 All though she hir clothis solde,
 And though she shulde an hongèd be ;
 For nakid as a worme was she,
 And if the wedir stormy were,
 For colde she shulde have dyèd there.
 She naddle on but a streit olde sak,
 And many a cloute on it ther stak ;
 This was hir cote and hir mantell,
 No more was there, never a dell, 460
 To clothe hir with, I undirtake ;
 Grete leyser haddè she to quake.
 And she was putt, that I of talke,
 Fer fro these other, up in an halke ;
 There lurkèd and there courèd she.
 For pover thing, where so it be,
 Is shamefast and dispisèd ay ;
 Acursèd may wel be that day
 That povere man conceyvèd is,
 For god wote al to selde, i-wys, 470
 Is ony povere man wel fedde

437. *to faire*, 'bonnes ovres faire'; 'faire' carelessly misread?

438. *haire*, O.F. 'haire,' a sleeveless shirt of hair worn as a penance.

442. *gate*, perhaps plural.

444. *face*, 'vis'; MSS. *grace*.

451. *holde*, G *woolde*; but cp. 395.

454. *nakid as a worme*, 'nue comme vers'; cp. *Tales*, E 880.

Or wel araièd or [wel] cledde,
 Or welbilovèd in sich wise
 In honour that he may arise.
 Alle these thingis well avised,
 As I have you er this devysed,
 With gold and asure over all
 Depeynted were upon the wall.
 Square was the wall and high sumdell.
 Enclosed and barred well, 480
 In stede of hegge, was that gardyne ;
 Come nevere shepherdè therynne.
 Into that gardyn wel y-wrought
 Who so that me coude have brought
 By laddre, or ellès by degre,
 It woldè wel have likèd me,
 For sich solace, sich joie and play
 I trowe that nevere man ne say,
 As was in that place delytous.
 The gardeyn was not daungerous 490
 To herberwe briddès many oon,
 So riche a yerde was nevere noon
 Of briddès songe and braunches grene ;
 Therynne were briddès mo I wene
 Than ben in all the rewme of Fraunce.
 Ful blisful was the accordaunce
 Of swete and pitous songe thei made ;
 For all this world it owghtè glade.
 And I my-silf so mery ferde,
 Whan I her blisful songès herde, 500
 That for an hundreth pounce nolde I,
 If that the passage opunly
 Haddè be unto me free,
 That I nolde entren forto se
 Thassemble—god kepe it fro care—
 Of briddis whiche therynnè ware.
 That songen thorough her mery throtes
 Dauncis of love and mery notes.
 Whan I thus herdè foulès synge,
 I felle fast in a weymentyng, 510
 By which art, or by what engyne,
 I myght come into that gardyne.
 But way I couthè fyndè noon
 Into that gardyne for to goon.
 Ne nought wist I if that ther were

472. MSS. omit *wel*.

480. The verse has apparently but three accents.

492. MSS. *yerr*.

501. MSS. *woulde*; *i.e.* I wouldn't take a hundred pounds not to enter.

505. Prof. Skeat changes *god kepe it fro care* to *god it kepe* and *were* on account of the un-Chaucerian rhyme.

Eýther hole or placé where,
 Bý which I myght have entre.
 Ne ther was noon to teché me,
 For I was al aloone i-wys,
 For-wo and alnowishis of this. 520
 Til atté last bithought I me,
 That by no weye ne myght it be
 That ther nas laddre, or wey to passe,
 Or hole, into so faire a place.
 Tho gan I go a full griete pas,
 Envyronyng evene in compas
 The closing of the squaré wall,
 Tyl that I fonde a wiket small,
 So shett that I ne myght in gon,
 And other entre was ther noon. 530
 Uppon this dore I gan to smyte
 That was [so] fetys and so lite,
 For other weye coude I not seke.
 Ful long I shof, and knokkide eke,
 And stood ful long and oft herknyng,
 If that I herde any wight comyng,
 Til that dore of thilk entre
 A mayden curteys openyde me.
 Hir heer was as yelowé of hewe
 As ony basyn scouréd newe, 540
 Hir flesh [as] tendre as is a chike,
 With benté browis smothe and slyke ;
 And by mesure largé were
 The openyng of hir yén clere ;
 Hir nose of good proporcioun,
 Hir yén grey as is a faucoun ;
 With sweté breth and wel savoured,
 Hir facé white and wel coloured,
 With litel mouth and rounde to see ;
 A clové chynne eke haddé she,
 Hir nekké was of good fasoun, 550
 In lengthe and gretnesse by resoun,
 Withoute bleyne, scabbe, or royne ;
 Fro Iersalem unto Burgoyne
 Ther nys a fairer nekke, i-wys,
 To fele how smothe and softe it is.
 Hir throte also white of hewe
 As snowe on braunché snowéd newe.
 Of body ful wel wrought was she,
 Men neded not in no cuntre 560

516. Perhaps read *there* for *where*.
 520. *For-wo*, very weary ; but perhaps mistake for *ful wo*.

535. *and oft* (Th. *al*, G *and of*) *herknyng*, 'par maintes fois escoutai.'

557. *also*, as. Perhaps read *was also*.

A fairer body forto seke.
 And of fyn orfrays haddé she eke
 A chapélet so semly oon
 Ne weréd never mayde upon.
 And faire above that chapélet
 A rosé gerland had she sett.
 She haddé [in honde] a gay mirroure,
 And with a riché gold tresour
 Hir heed was tresséd, queyntély.
 Hir slevé s sewid fetously, 570
 And forto kepe hir hondis faire
 Of glove's white she had a paire.
 And she haddé on a cote of grene
 Of cloth of Gaunt, withouten wene.
 Wel semyde by hir apparayle
 She was not wont to gret travayle ;
 For whan she kempte was fetisly,
 And wel arayed and richély,
 Thanne had she don al hir journe.
 For merye and wel bigoon was she, 580
 She laddé a lusty lyf in May ;
 She haddé no thought by nyght ne day
 Of no thyng, but it were oonly
 To graythe hir wel and uncouthly.
 Whan that this dore haddé opened me
 This may[de] semely forto see,
 I thanked hir as I best myght,
 And axide hir how that she hight,
 And what she was I axide eke.
 And she to me was nought unmeke, 590
 Ne of hir answer daungerous,
 But faire answeride, and seidé thus :—
 'Lo, sir, my name is YDELNESSE ;
 So clepé men me, more and lesse ;
 Ful myghty and ful riche am I,
 And that of oon thyng namély,
 For I entendé to no thyng,
 But to my joye, and my pleyying,
 And forto kembe and tressé me.
 Aqueynted am I and pryve 600
 With Myrthé, lord of this gardyne,
 That fro the lande Alexandryne
 Madé the trees hidre be fette

564. *upon*, adverb ; cp. 1085, *Tales*, D 568.

567. MSS. omit *in honde* ; 'en sa main.'

574. *Gaunt*, Ghent.

579. *journe*, day's work.

593. Cp. *Tales*, G 1-7, A 1940.

602. MSS. of *Alex*.

603. *be fette*, perhaps omit *be* ; cp. 607, 609, where the infinitives are passive, Fr. 'fist . . . faire,' 'fist portraire.'

That in this gardyne ben y-sette.
 And whan the trees were woxen on hight,
 This wall, that stant heere in thi sight,
 Dide Myrthe enclosen al aboute.
 And these ymages al withoute
 He dide hem bothe entaile and peynte,
 That neithir ben jolyf ne queynte, 610
 But they ben ful of sorowe and woo,
 As thou hast seen a while agoo.
 And oft tyme hym to solace
 Sir Myrthe cometh into this place,
 And eke with hym cometh his meynce,
 That lyven in lust and jolite.
 And now is Myrthe therynne to here
 The briddis, how they syngen clere,
 The mavys and the nyghtyngale,
 And other joly briddis smale. 620
 And thus he walketh to solace
 I hym and his folk, for swetter place
 To pleyen ynne he may not fynde,
 Al though he sought oon in-tyl Ynde.
 The alther-fairest folk to see
 That in this world may founde be
 Hath Mirthe with hym in his route,
 That folowen hym always aboute.
 Whan Ydelnesse had tolde al this,
 And I hadde herkned wel y-wys, 630
 Thanne seide I to dame Ydelnesse :
 ' Now also wisly god me blesse,
 Sith Myrthe that is so faire and fre
 Is in this yerde with his meyne,
 Fro thilk assemble, if I may,
 Shal no man werné me to-day,
 That I this nyght ne mote it see.
 For wel wene I there with hym be
 A faire and joly companye,
 Fulfilléd of all curtesie.' 640
 And forth, withoute wordis mo,
 In at the wicket went I tho,
 That Ydelnesse hadde opened me,
 Into that gardyne faire to see.
 And whan I was inne i-wys,
 Myn herté was ful glad of this.
 For wel wende I ful sikerly
 I have ben in Paradys erthly ;
 So faire it was that, trusteth wel,
 It semede a place espirituel.
 For certys, as at my devys,
 Ther is no place in Paradys

So good inne forto dwelle or be,
 As in that gardyne, thoughté me.
 For there was many a bridde syngyng
 Thorough-out the yerde al thringyng.
 In many places were nyghtyngales,
 Alpès, fynchès, and wodewales,
 That in her sweté song deliten.
 In thilkè places as they habiten, 660
 There myght[e] men see many flokkes
 Of turtles and [of] laverokkes.
 Chalaundres felé sawe I there,
 That wery, nygh forsongen were.
 And thrustles, terins, and mavys,
 That songen forto wynne hem prys,
 And eke to sormounte in hir songe
 That othere briddès hem amonge.
 By noté madé faire servyse
 These briddès that I you devise ; 670
 They songe her songe as faire and welc
 As angels don espirituel.
 And, trusteth wel, than I hem herde,
 Ful lustily and wel I ferde,
 For never yitt sich melodye
 Was herd of man that myghté dye.
 Sich sweté song was hem amonge,
 That me thought it no briddis songe,
 But it was wondir lyk to be
 Song of mermaydens of the see, 680
 That, for her syngyng is so clere,
 Though we mermaydens clepe hem here
 In English as is oure usaunce,
 Men clepè hem sereyns in Fraunce.
 Ententif weren forto synge
 These briddis, that nought unkunnyng
 Were of her craft and apprentys,
 But of song sotil and wys.
 And certis, whan I herde her songe,
 And sawe the grené place amonge, 690
 In herte I wexe so wondir gay,
 That I was never erst er that day
 So jolyf, nor so wel bigoo,
 Ne merye in herte, as I was thoo.
 And than wist I and sawe ful well,
 That Ydelnesse me servéd well,
 That me putte in sich jolite.

658. *Alpes*, bullfinches. *wodewales*, orioles (?).668. *That othere* (MSS. *other*) can be used with plural nouns; cp. 991.673. *than* (Th. *whan*, G. *that*), *whan*.680. Chaucer calls them *mermaids* in *Boece* 32, where the French version has *seraines*.645. Perhaps insert *ther* before *inne*.

Hir freend wel ought I forto be
 Sith she the dore of that gardyne
 Hadde openèd, and me leten inne. 700
 From hennès forth how that I wroughte,
 I shal you tellen as me thoughte.
 First wherof Myrthè servèd there,
 And eke what folk there with hym

were,
 Withouté fable I wole discryve ;
 And of that gardyne eke as blyve
 I wole you tellen aftir this
 The fairè fasoun all y-wys,
 That wel y-wrought was for the nones.
 I may not telle you all at ones, 710
 But as I may and can, I shall
 By ordre tellen you it all.
 Ful faire servise, and eke ful swete,
 These briddis maden, as they sete ;
 Layès of love ful wel sownyng,
 They songen in their jargonyng ;
 Summe high and summe eke lowè songe
 Upon the braunches grene y-spronge.
 The swetnesse of her melodye
 Made al myn herte in reverye. 720

And whan that I hadde heide, I trowe,
 These briddis syngyng on a rowe,
 Than myght I not withholdè me
 That I ne wente inne forto see
 Sir Myrthè ; for my desiryng
 Was hym to seen, over allè thyng ;
 His countenance and his manere,
 That sightè was to me ful dere.
 Tho wente I forth on my right honde
 Doun by a lytel path I fonde, 730
 Of mentès full and fenell grene.
 And fastè by, withouté wene,
 Sir Myrthe I fonde, and right anoon
 Unto sir Myrthè gan I goon,
 There as he was, hym to solace.
 And with hym in that lusty place
 So faire folk and so fresh had he,
 That whan I sawe I wondred me
 Fro whennès sichè folk myght come,
 So faire they weren all and some, 740
 For they were lyk, as to my sighte,
 To angels that ben fethered brighte.

This folk, of which I telle you soo,
 Upon a karole wenten thoo.

742. *fethered brighte*, with bright wings.

744. *karole*, a ring-dance to song.

A lady karolede hem, that hyght
 GLADNESSE, [the] blisfull and the light.
 Wel coude she syng and lustyly ;
 Noon half so wel and semely,
 Couthe make in song sich refiecyng.
 It sat hir wondir wel to syng ; 750
 Hir voice ful clere was and ful swete,
 She was nought rudè ne unmete,
 But couthe ynow of sich tournyng
 As longeth unto karolyng.
 For she was wont in every place
 To syngen first, folk to solace,
 For syngyng moost she gaf hir to,
 No craft had she so leef to do.
 Tho myghtist thou karoles sene,
 And folk daunce and mery bene, 760
 And makè many a faire tournyng
 Upon the grenè gras springyng.
 There myghtist thou see these flowtours,
 Mynstrales, and eke jogèlours,
 That wel to syngè dide her payne ;
 Somme songè songès of Loreyne,
 For in Loreyn her notès bee
 Full swetter than in this contre.
 Thère was many a tymbester,
 And saillouris that I dar wel swere, 770
 Couthe her craft ful parfitly ;
 The tymbres up ful sotilly,
 They caste and hente full ofte,
 Upon a fynger faire and softe,
 That they [ne] failide never mo.
 Ful fetys damysellès two,
 Ryght yonge and full of semelyhede,
 In kirtles and noon other wede
 And fairè tressèd every tresse,
 Hadde Myrthè doon, for his noblesse, 780
 Amydde the karole forto daunce.
 But herof lieth no remembraunce
 How that they dauncèd queyntly ;
 That oon wolde come all pryvyly
 Agayn that other, and whan they were
 To-gidre almost, they threwe yfere
 Her mouthis so that through her play
 It semèd as they kiste alway.

749. MSS. *And couthe*.

768. *this contre*, Orleans.

770. *saillouris*, dancers.

771. *that* possibly belongs before *couthe* in next verse ; Fr. 'Qui moult savoiënt.'

773. *They casten and [kiste] hente ful ofte* ; but perhaps a 3-beat line, cp. 480, 801.

To dauncen well koude they the gise,
 What shulde I more to you devyse ; 790
 Ne bode I never thennès go,
 Whiles that I sawe hem dauncè so.

Upon the karoll wonder faste
 I gan biholde, til attè laste
 A lady gan me forto espie ;
 And she was clepèd CURTESIE
 The worshipfull, the debonaire,
 I pray to god evere falle hir faire.
 Ful curteisly she callèd me,
 'What do ye there, Beau ser?' quod she,
 'Come [here], and if it lykè yow 801
 To dauncen, dauncith with us now.'

And I withoutè taryng
 Wènte into the karolyng.
 I was abasshèd never a dell,
 But it to me likèd right well
 That Curtesie me clepèd so,
 And bad me on the dauncè go.
 For if I haddè durst, certeyn
 I wolde have karolèd right fayn, 810
 As man that was to dauncè blithe.
 Thanne gan I loken oftè siþe
 The shape, the bodies, and the cheres,
 The countenaunce, and the maneres
 Of all the folk that dauncèd there ;
 And I shal tell [you] what they were.

Ful faire was Myrthe, ful longe and high,
 A fairer man I nevere sigh ;
 As rounde as appille was his face,
 Ful rody and white in every place. 820
 Fetys he was and wel beseye,
 With metely mouth and yèn greye,
 His nose by mesure wrought ful right.
 Crispe was his heer, and cek ful bright,
 Hise shuldris of a largè brede,
 And smalish in the girdilstede.
 He semèd lyke a portreiture,
 So noble he was of his stature,
 So faire, so joly and so fetys,
 With lymès wrought at poynt devys, 830
 Delyver, smert, and of grete myght ;
 Ne sawe thou nevere man so lyght.
 Of berde unnethe hadde he no thyng,
 For it was in the firstè spryng.

791. *bode*, mistake for *bede*, or *bad*; cp. 808.
 The same Fr. is differently rendered at 1854.

801. *here*, MSS. omit; Fr. 'ça venez.'

806. Sk. *it me likede*.

811. MSS. *right blithe*.

Ful yonge he was, and mery of thought ;
 And in samette with briddis wrought,
 And with gold beten ful fetysly,
 His body was clad ful richely.
 Wrought was his robe in straungè gise
 And al to-slytered for queyntise 840
 In many a placè lowe and hie ;
 And shode he was with grete maistrie,
 With shoon decopèd and with laas.
 By druèry and by solas,
 His leef a rosyn chapèlet

Hadde made and on his heed it set.

And witè ye who was his leef?
 Dame Gladnesse there was hym so leef,
 That syngith so wel with glad courage,
 That from she was .XII. yeer of age, 850
 She of hir lovè graunt hym made.
 Sir Mirthe hir by the fynger hadde
 Dáunsyng, and she hym also ;
 Grete lovè was atwixe hem two.

Bothe were they faire and bright of hewe ;
 She semède lyke a rosè newe
 Of colour, and hir flesh so tendre
 That with a brerè smale and slendre
 Men myght it cleve, I dar wel seyn ;
 Hir forheed frouncèles, al pleyn ; 860
 Bent were hir [brownè] browis two,
 Hir yèn greye and glad also,
 That laugheden ay in hir semblaunt
 First or the mouth, by covenaut.

I not what of hir nose descryve,
 So faire hath no womman alyve.
 Hir heer was yelowè, and clere shynyng,
 I wot no lady so likyng.
 Of orfrays fresh was hir gerland ;
 I, which seyen have a thousand, 870
 Saugh never y-wys no gerlond yitt,
 So wel y-wrought of silk as it.

And in an overgilt samit
 Cladde she was, by grete delit,
 Of which hir leef a robè werede ;
 The myrier she in hir hertè ferede.

And next hir wente, in hir other side,
 The GOD OF LOVE, that can devyde
 Love, and as hym likith it be,
 But he can cherles daunten, he, 880

861. *browne*, supplied from Fr.

865. MSS. insert *wot* before *not* and *I shal* before *descryve*.

873. *samit*, robe of samite.

And maken folkis pridè fallen,
 And he can wel these lordis thrallen,
 And ladyes putt at lowe degre,
 Whan he may hem to proudè see.
 This God of Love of his fasoun
 Was lyke no knavè, ne quystroun.
 His beaute gretly was to preyse,
 But of his robè to devise
 I drede encombred forto be ;
 For nought y-clad in silk was he, 890
 But all in floures and in flourettes,
 I-paynted all with amorettes.
 And with losengès, and scochouns,
 With briddès, lybardes, and lyouns,
 And other beestis wrought ful well,
 His garnèment was everydell
 Y-portreid, and wrought with floures,
 By dyvers medlyng of coloures.
 Floures there were of many gise,
 Y-sett by compas in assise ; 900
 Ther lakkide no flour to my dome,
 Ne nought so mych as flour of brome,
 Ne violete, ne eke pervynke,
 Ne flour noon that man can on thynke ;
 And many a rosè-leef ful longe,
 Was entermelled ther amonge,
 And also on his heed was sette
 Of roses reed a chapèlett.
 But nyghtyngales, a full grete route
 That flyen over his heed aboute, 910
 The leeves felden as they flyen ;
 And he was all with briddès wryen,
 With popynjay, with nyghtyngale,
 With chalaundre, and with wodèwale,
 With fynche, with lark, and with arch-
 aungell.
 He semede as he were an aungell,
 That doun were comen fro hevene
 clere.

Love hadde with hym a bachelere,
 That he made alleweyes with hym be ;
 SWETE LOKYNG clepèd was he. 920
 This bachelere stode biholding
 The daunce ; and in his honde holding

Turkè bowès two had he.
 That oon of hem was of a tree
 That bereth a fruyt of savour wykke,
 Ful crokid was that foulè stikke ;
 And knotty here and there also,
 And blak as bery, or ony slo.
 That other bowe was of a plante
 Withouten wem, I dar warante, 930
 Ful evene, and by proporcioun
 Treitys and long, of good fasoun ;
 And it was peynted wel and thwyten,
 And over al diapred and writen
 With ladyes and with bachelers,
 Full lyghtsom and glad of cheris.
 These bowès two helde Swete-lokyng,
 That semède lyk no gadèlyng,
 And ten brode arowis hilde he there,
 Of which .V. in his righthond were ; 940
 But they were shaven well and dight,
 Nokkèd and fetherèd aright,
 And all they were with gold bygoon,
 And strongè poynnted everychoon,
 And sharpè forto kerven well.
 But iren was ther noon, ne steell,
 For al was golde, men myght it see,
 Out-take the fetherès and the tree.
 The swiftest of these arowis fyve
 Out of a bowè forto dryve, 950
 And bestè fetherèd for to flee,
 And fairest eke, was clepid Beaute ;
 That other arowe that hurthet lesse
 Was clepid, as I trowe, Symplesse ;
 The thriddè clepèd was Fraunchise
 That fethrèd was in noble wise,
 With valour and with curtesye ;
 The fourthe was cleped Compaignye,
 That hevy forto shoten ys ;
 But who so shetith right y-wys, 960
 May therwith doon grete harme and wo.
 The fiftè of these, and laste also,
 Faire-Semblaunt men that arowe calle,
 The leestè grevous of hem alle,
 Yit can it make a ful grete wounde.
 But he may hope his soris sounde,
 That hurt is with that arowe y-wys ;
 His wo the bette bistowèd is,

886. *quystroun* (O.F. *coistron*), scullion.

892. Found only in Th.

892. *with amorettes*, 'by amorous girls'; cp.

4755. 'With' in this sense is common in Middle English; cp. *Troilus*, iv. 80.

915. *archaungell*; Fr. 'mesanges,' which Cotgrave defines as titmouse.

923. *Turke bowes*, etc. MSS. add *ful wel devysed* (not in Fr.) after *two*. Cp. *Tales*, A 2895, where 'Turkeis.'

932. MSS. *ful good*; Fr. 'de bone façon.'

For he may sonner have gladnesse ;
 His langour oughte be the lesse. 970
 Five arowis were of other gise,
 That ben ful foulé to devyse,
 For shaft and ende, soth forto telle,
 Were also blak as fende in helle.
 The first of hem is calléd Pride,
 That other arowe next hym biside,
 It was [y-]clepéd Vylanye.
 That arowe was al with felonye
 Envenymed, and with spitous blame.
 The thriddle of hem was clepéd Shame,
 The fourthé Wanhope clepéd is, 981
 The fifté Newé-thought, y-wys.
 These arowis that I speke of heere
 Were allé fyve on oon manecre,
 And allé were they resemblable.
 To hem was wel sitting and able,
 The foulé croked bowe hidous
 That knotty was, and al roynous ;
 That bowé seméde wel to shete
 These arowis fyve, that ben unmete 990
 And contrarye to that other fyve.
 But though I tellé not as blyve
 Of her power, ne of her myght,
 Herafter shal I tellen right
 The soothe, and eke signyfiaunce ;
 As fer as I have remembraunce
 All shal be seid, I undirtake,
 Er of this book an ende I make.
 Now come I to my tale ageyn.
 But aldirfirst I wole you seyn 1000
 The fasoun and the countenaunces
 Of all the folk that on the daunce is.
 The God of Love, jolyf and lyght,
 Ladde on his honde a lady bright,
 Of high prys and of grette degre ;
 This lady calléd was Beaute,
 As an arowe of which I tolde,
 Ful wel [y-]thewéd was she holde ;
 Ne she was derk, ne broun, but bright,
 And clere as [is] the moné lyght, 1010
 Ageyn whom all the sterrés semen
 But smalé candels, as we demen.
 Hir flesh was tendre as dewe of flour,
 Hir chere was sylple as byrde in bour,
 As whyte as lylie or rose in rys ;

978. MSS. read as for *al*, 'toute.'991. Perhaps read *contraire*; cp. 348.1014. *byrde*, bride.

Hir facé gentyl and tretys,
 Fetys she was, and smale to se ;
 No wyntred browis haddé she,
 Ne poppéd hir, for it nedéd nought 1019
 To wyndre hir, or to peynte hir ought.
 Hir tresses yelowé, and longé straughten,
 Unto hir helys doun they raughten ;
 Hir nose, hir mouth, and eyhe, and cheke
 Wel wrought, and all the remenaunt eke.
 A ful grette savour and a swote
 Me toucheth in myn herté rote,
 As helpe me god, whan I remembre
 Of the fasoun of every membre.
 In world is noon so faire a wight ;
 For yonge she was, and hewéd bright,
 Sore plesaunt, and fetys with all, 1031
 Gente, and in hir myddill small.
 Bisidé Beaute yede richesse,
 An high lady of gret noblesse,
 And gret of prys in every place ;
 But who so durste to hir trespase,
 Or til hir folk, in word or dede, 990
 He were full hardy, out of drede.
 For bothe she helpe and hyndre may ;
 And that is nought of yisterday, 1040
 That riché folk have full gret myght
 To helpe, and eke to greve a wyght.
 The leste and grettest of valour
 Diden Rychesse ful gret honour,
 And besy weren hir to serve,
 For that they wolde hir love deserve.
 They clepéd hir 'Lady,' grette and small ;
 This widé world hir dredith all,
 This world is all in hir daungere.
 Hir court hath many a losengere, 1050
 And many a traytour envyous,
 That ben ful besy and curyous
 Forto dispreisen and to blame

1018. *wyntred*, 'guignie, not elsewhere found in English unless in *'winrede braves'*, O.E. Homilies (Morris) ii. 213, where the meaning seems to be 'ogling glances' as here. Sk. changes to *wyndred* as in 1020.1019. *popped*, defined by Coles (1713) 'drest fine.' v. Dyce's Skelton ii. 239, where *popte sole* is quoted.1020. *wyndre*, to trim (the hair), Coles, cp. 1018.1026. *toucheth*, Kaluza's emendation for *thought* of the MSS.1037. MSS. *uerk*, 'par fais ou par dis.'1043. MSS. *beste* for *leste*, 'li greignor et li menor.'

That best deserven love and name.
 Bifore the folk, hem to bigilen,
 These losengeris hem preyse, and smylen,
 And thus the world with word anynten;
 And aftirward they prille, and poynnten
 The folk right to the barè boon,
 Bihynde her bak whan they ben goon,
 And foule abate the folkis prys. 1061
 Ful many a worthy man, y-wys
 An hundrid, havè do to dye
 These losengers thorough flaterye;
 And makè folk ful straungè be
 There hem oughtè be pryve.
 Wel yvel mote they thryve and thee,
 And yvel arryvd mote they be,
 These losengers ful of envye;
 No good man loveth her companye. 1070
 Richesse a robe of purpur on hadde,
 Ne trowe not that I lye or madde,
 For in this world is noon hir lyche,
 Ne by a thousand deel so riche,
 Ne noon so faire; for it ful well
 With orfrays leyd was everydeell
 And portraied in the ribanynges
 Of dukès storyes, and of kynges,
 And with a bend of gold tasseled,
 And knoppis fyne of gold ained. 1080
 Aboute hir nekke of gentyl entayle
 Was shete the richè chevesaile,
 In which ther was full gret plente
 Of stones clere and bright to see.
 Rychesse a girdell hadde upon,
 The bokele of it was of a stoon,
 Of vertu gret and mochel of myght;
 For who so bare the stoon so bright,
 Of venym durst hym no thing doute,
 While he the stoon hadde hym aboute.
 That stoon was gretly forto love, 1091
 And, tyl a richè mannys byhove,
 Worth all the gold in Rome and Frise.
 The mourdaunt wrought in noble wise

1058. *prille* (Th. *prill*, G. *prile*), Fr. 'poignant,' may be right (cp. sb. *prill*, a top), and mean 'pirouette.' But probably the scribe's mistake for *thril*, pierce; cp. 5556, where *depe* for *dothe*.

1065. *And make*, Th. *And maketh*; G *have maad*, 'car il tout,' etc.

1068. *arryved*, G *achyved*.

1089. *durst*, need. The forms of *durren* and *tharf* were confused in Middle English; cp. 1324, 1360.

1094. *mourdaunt*, the pendant of the girdle.

Was of a stoon full precious,
 That was so fyne and vertuous
 That hole a man it koudè make
 Of palasie, and [of] tothe ake.
 And yit the stoon hadde such a grace
 That he was siker in every place, 1100
 All thilkè day not blynde to bene,
 That fastyngmyght that stoon [have] seene.
 The barres were of gold ful fyne
 Upon a tyssu of satyne,
 Full hevvy, gret, and no thyng lyght,
 In everiche was a besaunt-wight.
 Upon the tresses of Richesse
 Was sette a cercle, for noblesse,
 Of brend gold that full lyghtè shoon,
 So faire trowe I was never noon. 1110
 But she were kunnyng for the nonys,
 That koudè devysè alle the stonys,
 That in that cercle shewen clere.
 It is a wondir thing to here,
 For no man koudè preyse or gesse
 Of hem the valewe or richesse.
 Rubyes there were, saphires, jagounces,
 And emeraudes more than two ounces.
 But all byfore ful sotilly
 A fyn charboncle sette saugh I; 1120
 The stoon so clere was and so bright,
 That also soone as it was nyght,
 Men myght[è] seen to go for nede
 A myle or two in lengthe and brede.
 Sích lyght sprang oute of the stone,
 That Richesse wondir brightè shone,
 Bóthe hir heed and all hir face,
 And eke aboute hir al the place.

Dame Richesse on hir honde gan lede
 A yong man full of semelyhede, 1130
 That she best loved of any thing.
 His lust was mych in housholding,
 In clothyng was he ful fetys,
 And loved to have well hors of prys;
 He wende to have reproved be
 Of theft or moordre, if that he
 Hadde in his stable any hakeney.
 And therfore he desired ay

1102. *have*, supplied from Fr., 'l'avait veüe.'

1106. *besaunt*, a gold coin worth about a half sovereign.

1117. *jagounces*, cp. 'There is a stone whiche called is jagounce. . . . Cytryne of colour, lyke garnettes of entayle.' Lydgate's *Minor Poems*, p. 188.

To be aqweynted with Richesse,
 For all his purpos, as I gesse, 1140
 Was forto maké gret dispense
 Withouté wernyng or diffense;
 And Richesse myght it wel sustene
 And hir dispencé well mayntene,
 And hym alwey sich plenté sende
 Of gold and silver forto spende
 Withouté lakking or daunger,
 As it were poured in a garner.

And after on the dauncé wente
 LARGESSE, that sette al hir entente 1150
 Forto be honourable and free.
 Of Alexandres kyn was she;
 Hir mosté joyé was y-wys
 Whan that she yaf, and seide, 'I have
 this.'

Not Avarice, the foule caytyf,
 Was half to gripe so ententyf,
 As Largesse is to yeve and spende;
 And god ynough alwey hir sende,
 So that the more she yaf away
 The more y-wys she hadde alwey. 1160

Gret loos hath Largesse and gret pris,
 For bothé wyse folk and unwys
 Were hooly to hir baundon brought,
 So wel with yiftés hath she wrought.
 And if she hadde an enemy,
 I trowe that she coude tristely
 Make hym full soone hir freend to be,
 So large of yift and free was she.
 Therfore she stode in love and grace
 Of riche and pover in every place. 1170

A full gret fool is he y-wys
 That bothé riche and nygart is;
 A lord may have no maner vice
 That greveth more than avarice;
 For nygart never with strengthe of
 honde

May wynné gret lordship or londe;
 For freendis all to fewe hath he
 To doon his will perfourméd be.
 And who so wole have freendis heere,
 He may not holde his tresour deere. 1180
 For by ensample I tellé this,
 Right as an adamaund y-wys
 Can drawn to hym sotylly
 The yren that is leid thereby,

1158. *sende*, sent.1166. *tristely*, Th. *craftely*.

So drawith folkés hertis y-wis
 Silver and gold that yeven is.
 Largesse hadde on a robé fresch
 Of riché purpur Sarsynesh.
 Wel fourméd was hir face and cleere,
 And opened hadde she hir colere; 1190
 For she right there hadde in present
 Unto a lady maad present
 Of a gold broché, ful wel wrought.
 And certys it myssatte hir nought,
 For thorough hirmsokké wrought with silk
 The flesh was seen as white as mylk.
 Largesse, that worthy was and wys,
 Hilde by the honde a knyght of prys,
 Was sibbe to Artour of Britaigne,
 And that was he that bare the ensaigne
 Of worship, and the gounfanoun. 1201
 And yit he is of sich renoun
 That men of hym seye fairé thynges
 Byforé barouns, erles, and kynges.
 This knyght was comen all newly
 Fro [a] tourneyng fasté by.

Ther hadde he don gret chyvalrie
 Through his vertu and his maistrie,
 And for the love of his lemman
 He caste down many a doughty man. 1210
 And nexthym daunced dame FRAUNCHISE,
 Arayéd in full noblé gyse.

She was not broune ne dunne of hewe,
 But white as snowe y-fallen newe.
 Hir nose was wrought at poynt devys,
 For it was gentyl and tretys,
 With eyen gladde and browés bente,
 Hir here doun to hir helis wente;
 And she was symple as dowwe on tree.
 Ful debonaire of herte was she; 1220
 She durst neither seyn ne do
 Bút that that hir longéd to.
 And if a man were in distresse,
 And for hir love in hevynesse
 Hir herte wolde have full gret pite,
 She was so amiable and free.
 For were a man for hir bistadde,
 She wolde ben right sore adradde
 That she dide over gret outrage;
 But she hym holpe his harme to aswage,

1185. *hertis*, as in v. 76, is to be read as one syllable.1188. MSS. *Sarlynysh*.1199. *i.e.* Who was sib, etc.1206. MSS. omit *a*; Fr. 'd'un tornoiement.

Hir thought it ell a vylanye. 1231
 And she hadde on a sukkenye
 That not of hempe ne heerd is was ;
 So fair was noon in all Arras.
 Lord, it was ridled fetysly !
 Ther nas nat a poynt trewely
 That it nas in his right assise.
 Full wel y-clothed was Fraunchise,
 For ther is no cloth sittith bet
 On damysell than doth roket ; 1240
 A woman wel more fetys is
 In roket than in cote y-wis.
 The whyt roket, rydded faire,
 Bitokeneth that full debonaire
 And swetè was she that it bere.

Bí hir daunced a bachelere ;
 I can not telle you what he hight,
 But faire he was and of good hight,
 All hadde he be, I sey no more,
 The lordis sone of Wyndesore. 1250

And next that daunced CURTESYE,
 That preiséd was of lowe and hye,
 For neither proude ne foole was she.
 She forto dauncé calléd me,
 I pray god yeve hir right good grace !
 Whanne I come first into the place,
 She was not nyce ne outrageous,
 But wys and wate and vertuous ;
 Of faire speche and of faire answe, 1260
 Was never wight mysscid of here,
 Ne she bar rancour to no wight.
 Clere broune she was and therto bright
 Of face, of body avenaunt ;
 I wot no lady so plesaunt.
 She were worthy forto bene
 An emperesse or crowned quene.

And by hir wente a knyght dauncyng,
 That worthy was and wel spekyng,
 And ful wel koude he don honour.
 The knyght was faire and styf in stour,
 And in armure a semely man, 1271
 And welbiloved of his lemman.

Faire IDILNESSÉ thanne saugh I,
 That alwey was me fasté by ;
 Of hir have I withouté fayle

1232. *sukkenye*, 'sorquanie,' a canvas jacket, frock, or gaberdine (Cotgr.).

1236. *a poynt*, one point.

1250. *i.e.* Edward I. the son of Henry III. of England.

1265. *were* (G omits) ; Kaluza reads *wel was*.

Told yow the shap and apparayle.
 For, as I seide, loo that was she
 That dide to me so gret bounte,
 That she the gate of the gardyn
 Undide and lete me passen in. 1280

And after dauncéd, as I gesse,
 YOUTHE fulfilled of lustynesse,
 That nas not yit XII yeer of age,
 With herté wyldé and thought volage.
 Nyce she was, but she ne mente
 Noon harme ne slight in hir cntente,
 But oonly lust and jolyte ;
 For yongé folk wele witen ye
 Have lytel thought but on her play.
 Hir lemman was biside alway 1290

In sich a gise that he hir kyste
 At allé tymés that hym lysté ;
 That all the dauncé myght it see,
 They make no force of pryvete ;
 For who spake of hem yvel or well,
 They were ashamed neveradell,
 But men myght seen hem kisse there,
 As it two yongé dowves were.
 For yong was thilk bachelere,
 Of beaute wot I noon his pere, 1300
 And he was right of sich an age
 As Youthe his leef, and sich corage.

The lusty folk that dauncéd there,
 And also other that with hem were,
 That weren all of her meyne,
 Ful hendé folk and wys and free
 And folk of faire port trewely
 They weren allé comunly.

Whanne I hadde seen the countenaunces
 Of hem that ladden thus these daunces,
 Thanne hadde I will to gon and see 1311
 The gardyne that so lyked me,
 And licken on these fairé loreres,
 On pyntrees, cedres, and olmeris.
 The daunces thanne y-ended were,
 For many of hem that dauncéd there
 Were with her lovés went away,
 Undir the trees to have her play.
 A lord, they lyvéd lustly !
 A gret fool were he sikirly 1320

1282. *Youthe* (MSS. *And she*), proposed by Ten Brink.

1308. *They*, MSS. *There*.

1314. *olmeris* (G *olivieris* ?), elms. 'Moriers' was perhaps read as *olmiers* ; but *olyveris* in v. 1381 translates 'oliviers.'

That nolde his thankès such lyf lede.
 For this dar I seyn oute of drede,
 That who so myghte so wel fare,
 For better lyf durst hym not care ;
 For ther nys so good paradys
 As to have a love at his devys.
 Oute of that placé wente I thoo,
 And in that gardyn gan I goo,
 Pleyng alonge full meryly.
 The God of Love full hastily 1330
 Unto hym Swetè-Lokyng clepte
 No lenger wolde he that he kepte
 His bowe of gold, that shoon so bright ;
 He bad hym bend it anoon ryght.
 And he full soonè sette an-ende,
 And at a braid he gan it bende ;
 And toke hym of his arowes fyve,
 Full sharp and redy forto dryve.

Now god that sittith in mageste,
 Fro deedly woundes he kepè me, 1340
 If so be that he hadde me shette !
 For if I with his arowe mette,
 It hadde me grevèd sore y-wys.
 But I, that no thyng wist of this,
 Wente up and doun full many away,
 And he me folwed faste alwey ;
 But no where wolde I restè me,
 Till I hadde in all the gardyn be.

The gardyn was by mesuryng
 Right evene and square ; in compassing
 It was as long as it was large. 1351
 Of fruyt hadde every tree his charge,
 But it were any hidous tree,
 Of which ther werè two or three.
 There were, and that wote I full well,
 Of pome garnettys a full gret dell,
 That is a fruyt full well to lyke,
 Namely to folk whanne they ben sike.
 And trees there were of gret foison
 That baren nottes in her sesoun 1360
 Such as men notè myggès calle,
 That swote of savour ben withalle ;
 And almandèrès gret plente,

1321. *his thanks*, willingly.

1326. *his* is often indefinite in Middle English.

1336. *at a braid*, immediately.

1341. Skeat reads *wol* for *hadde*; Fr. 'Se il fait tant que a moi traie.' Perhaps join with the next line by reading *Or* for *For* in 1342.

1363. *almanderes*, MSS. *almandres*, Fr. 'alemandiers.'

Fygès, and many a datè tree,
 There wexen, if men haddè nede,
 Thorough the gardyn in length and brede.
 Ther was eke wexyng many a spice,
 As clowe-gelofre, and lycorice,
 Gyngevre, and greyn de Paradys,
 Canell, and setèwale of prys, 1370
 And many a spicè delitable
 To eten whan men rise fro table.
 And many homly trees ther were
 That peches, coynes, and apples beere,
 Méllers, plowmes, perys chesteynis,
 Cléferys, of which many oon fayne is,
 Nôtes, aleys, and bolas,
 That forto seen it was solas ;
 With many high lorer and pyn
 Was renged clene all that gardyn, 1380
 With cipres and with olyveris,
 Of which that nygh no plente heere is.
 There were clmès grete and stronge,
 Maples, asshe, oke, aspè, planes longe,
 Fyne ew, popler, and lynde, faire,
 And othere trees full many a payre--
 What shulde I tel you more of it ?
 There were so many treès yit,
 That I shulde al encombered be
 Er I had rekened every tree. 1390

These trees were sette, that I devyse,
 One from another in assyse
 Fyve fadome or sixe, I trowè so ;
 But they were hye and great also,
 And for to kepe out wel the sonne,
 The croppès were so thicke y-ronne,
 And every braunche in other knette,
 And ful of grenè leves sette,
 That sonnè myght there none discende,
 Lest [it] the tender grasses shende. 1400
 There myght men does and roes y-se,
 And of squyrels ful great plente
 From bowe to bowe alwaye lepyng ;
 Connès there were also playngge,
 That comyn out of her clapers,
 Of sondrie colours and maners,
 And maden many a tourneyng
 Upon the fresshé grasse spryngyng.

In places sawe I wellès there
 In whichè there no froggès were, 1410
 And fayre in shadowe was every welle.
 But I ne can the nombre telle

1411. *shadowe*, perhaps read *shade*.

Of stremys smal, that by devyse
Myrthe had done come through condyse;
Of whiche the water in rennyng
Gan make a noysè ful lykyng.

About the brinkès of these welles
And by the stremès over al elles
Sprange up the grasse, as thicke y-set
And softe as any veluet, 1420
On whiche men myght his lemman ley
As on a fetherbed to pley,
For the erthè was ful softe and swete.
Through moisture of the wellè wete
Spronge up the sotè grenè gras
As fayre, as thicke, as myster was.
But moche amended it the place
That therthè was of suche a grace
That it of flourès hath plente,
That bothe in somer and wynter be. 1430
There sprange the vyolet al newe,
And fresshe pervynkè riche of hewe,
And floures yelowè, white, and rede,
Suche plente grewe there never in mede.
Ful gaye was al the grounde, and queynt
And poudred, as men had it peynt
With many a fresshe and sondrie floure,
That casten up ful good savour.

I wol nat longe holde you in fable
Of al this garden delectable, 1440
I mote my tongè stynten nede;
For I ne maye withouten drede
Naught tellen you the beaute al,
Ne halfe the bounte there with al.

I went on right honde and on leftè
About the place; it was nat leftè
Tyl I had al the garden [in] bene,
In the esters that men myghtè sene.
And thus while I wente in my playe
The God of Love me folowed aye, 1450
Right as an hunter can abyde
The beest, tyl he seèth his tyde
To shoten at good messe to the dere,
Whan that hym nedeth go no nere.

And so befyl I rested me
Besydes a wel under a tree,
Whiche tree in Fraunce men cal a pyne;

1420. *veluet*, trisyllabic.

1426. *myster*, need; cp. vv. 6519, 6581, 7324.

1429. *hath*; cp. 1652 for a similar change of tense.

1436. *poudred*, 'polec.'

1447. Cp. v. 1348.

But sithe the tyme of kyng Pepyne,
Ne grewe there tree in mannès syght
So fayre, ne so wel woxe in hight, 1460
In al that yarde so high was none.
And springyng in a marble stone
Had nature set, the sothe to telle,
Under that pynè tree a welle;
And on the border al withoute
Was written in the stone aboute
Letters smal, that sayden thus:
'Here starfe the fayrè Narcisus.'

Narcisus was a bachelere 1469
That Love had caught in his daungere,
And in his nette gan hym so strayne,
And dyd him so to wepe and playne,
That nede him must his lyfe forgo.
For a fayre lady that hight Echo
Him loved over any créature,
And gan for hym suche payne endure,
That on a tymè she him tolde
Thát, if he her loven nolde,
That her behovèd nedès dye,
There laye none other remedye. 1480

But nathellesse for his beaute
So feirs and daungerous was he
That he nolde grauntè hir askyng,
For wepyng ne for faire praiyng,
And whanne she herd hym wernè soo,
She hadde in hertè so gret woo,
And took it in so gret dispite,
That she withoutè more respite
Was deed anoon. But er she deied
Full pitously to god she preied, 1490
That proudè-hertid Narcisus,
That was in love so daungerous,
Myght on a day be hampered so
For love, and ben so hoot for woo,
That never he myght to joye atteyne,
Than he shulde feece in every veyne
What sorowe trewè lovers maken
That ben so velaynesly forsaken.
This prayer was but resonable,
Therefore god helde it ferme and stable.
For Narcisus, shortly to telle, 1501
By aventure come to that welle,
To resten hym in that shadowing
A day whanne he come fro huntynge.

1470. *daungere*, dominion.

1473. *nede*, adverbial.

1496. *Than*, when.

This Narcisus hadde suffred paynes
 For rennyng alday in the playnes,
 And was for thurst in grete distresse
 Of heet, and of his werynesse
 That hadde his breth almost bynomen.
 Whanne he was to that welles y-comen,
 That shadowid was with braunches grene,
 He thoughte of thilk water shene 1512
 To drynke, and fresshe hym wel withalle;
 And down on knees he gan to falle,
 And forth his heed and necke out straught
 To drynken of that welles a draught.
 And in the water anon was sene
 His nose, his mouth, his yē shene,
 And he therof was all abasshed;
 His ownē shadowe had hym bytrasshed,
 For well wende he the formē see 1521
 Of a child of gret beaute.
 Well kouthē Love hym wreke thoo
 Of daunger and of pride also,
 That Narcisus somtyme hym beere.
 He quytte hym well his guerdoun there;
 For he musede so in the welles
 That, shortly all the sothe to telle,
 He lovede his ownē shadowe soo,
 That attē laste he starf for woo. 1530
 For whanne he saugh that he his wille
 Myght in no maner way fulfille,
 And that he was so fastē caught
 That he hym kouthē comforte nought,
 He loste his witte right in that place,
 And deyde withynne a lytel space.
 And thus his warisoun he took
 Fro the lady that he forsook.
 Ladies I preye ensample takith,
 Ye that ageyns youre love mistakith; 1540
 For if her deth be yow to wite,
 God kan ful well youre whilē quyte.
 Whanne that this lettre of which I telle
 Hadde taught me that it was the welles
 Of Narcisus in his beaute,
 I gan anon withdrawē me,
 Whanne it felle in my remembraunce
 That hym bitiddē such myschaunce.

1537. *warisoun*, 'guerredon' (confused with *guerrison* ?), reward.

1538. *Fro*, MSS. *For*, 'de la meschine.'

1540. *love*, 'amis,' perhaps read *loves*; but cp. v. 1965.

1541. *ageyns* here means 'in respect to.'

1542. *to wite*, gerundive, i.e. is to be imputed to you.

1543. *lettre*, writing.

But at the lastē thanne thought I
 That scathēles full sykerly 1550
 I myght unto the wellē goo—
 Wherof shulde I abaisshe soo?
 Unto the welles than went I me,
 And down I loutede forto see
 The clere water in the stoon,
 And eke the gravell which that shoon
 Down in the botme as silver fyn.
 For of the well this is the fyn,
 In world is noon so clere of hewe.
 The water is evere fresh and newe 1560
 That welmeth up with wawis bright
 The mountance of two synger hight.
 Abouten it is gras spryngyng
 For moiste so thikke and wel likyng,
 That it ne may in wynter dye
 No more than may the see be drye.

Downe at the botmē sette sawe I
 Two cristall stonys craftely
 In thilk freshe and fairē welles.
 But o thing sothly dar I telle 1570
 That ye wole holde a gret mervayle
 Whanne it is tolde, withouten fayle.
 For whanne the sonnē clere in sight
 Cast in that welles his bemys bright,
 And that the heete descendid is,
 Thanne taketh the cristall stoon y-wis
 Agayn the sonne an hundrid hewis,
 Blewe, yelowē, and rede that fresh and
 newe is.

Yitt hath the merveilous cristall
 Such strengthē, that the place overall, 1580
 Bothe flour, and tree, and leves grene,
 And all the yerde in it is seene.
 And forto don you to undirstonde,
 To make ensample wole I fonde.
 Ryght as a myrroure openly
 Shewith allē thing that stont therby,
 As well the colour as the figure,
 Withouten ony coverture;
 Right so the cristall stoon shynyng,
 Withouten ony disseyvnyng, 1590
 The estres of the yerde accusith,
 To hym that in the water musith.
 For evere in which half that ye be

1578. *rede that fresh and newe is*, 'vermeil.'

1581. *flour*, MSS. *foule*; Fr. 'fleurs.'

1586. *stont*, MSS. *stoundith*; read *Shew'th alle thing*, etc.

1591. *estres* (MSS. *entrees*), 'l'estre.'

Ye may well half the gardyne se ;
 And if he turne, he may right well
 Sene the remenaunt everydell.
 For ther is noon so litil thyng
 So hidde ne closid with sluttynge,
 That it ne is sene as though it were
 Peyntid in the cristall there. 1600
 This is the mirroure perilous,
 In which the proud Narcisus
 Sawe all his facé faire and bright ;
 That made hym swithe to lie upright.
 For who so loketh in that mirroure,
 Ther may no thyng ben his socour,
 That he ne shall there sene some thyng
 That shal hym lede into lovyng.
 Full many worthy man hath it
 Y-blent, for folk of grettist wit 1610
 Ben sooné caught heere and awayted ;
 Withouten respite ben they baited.
 Heere comth to folk of newé rage,
 Heere chaungith many wight corage ;
 Heere lith no rede ne witte therto,
 For Venus sone, daun Cupido,
 Hath sowen there of love the seed,
 That help ne lith there noon, ne rede,
 So cerclith it the welle aboute.
 His gynnés hath he sett withoute, 1620
 Ryght forto cacche in his panter
 These damoyseles and bachelers.
 Love will noon other briddé cacche
 Though he sette either nette or lacche.
 And for the seed that heere was sowen
 This welle is clepid, as well is knowen,
 The Welle of Love of verray right,
 Of which ther hath ful many a wight
 Spóke in bookis dyversely. 1630
 But they shull never so verily
 Descripcioun of the wellé heere,
 Ne eke the sothe of this matere,
 As ye shull, whanne I have undo
 The craft that hir bilongith to.

Allway me likéd forto dwelle
 To sene the cristall in the welle,

That shewide me full openly
 A thousand thingés fasté by.
 But I may say in sory houre
 Stode I to loken or to poure, 1640
 For sithen [have] I soré siked ;
 That mirroure hath me now entriked.
 But hadde I first knowen in my wit
 The vertue and [the] strengthe of it,
 I noldé not have mused there ;
 Mé had bette bene ellis where,
 For in the snare I fell anoon
 That hath bitresshed many oon.
 In thilké mirroure sawe I tho,
 Among a thousand thingés mo, 1650
 A roser chargid full of rosis,
 That with an hegge aboute enclos is.
 Tho had I sich lust and envie,
 That for Parys, ne for Pavie,
 Nolde I have left to goon and see
 There grettist hepe of roses be.
 Whanne I was with this ragé hent,
 That caught hath many a man and shent,
 Toward the roser gan I go.
 And whanne I was not fer therfro, 1660
 The savour of the roses swote
 Me smote right to the herté rote,
 As I hadde all enbawmed be.
 And if I ne hadde endouted me
 To have ben hatid or assailed,
 My thankis wolde I not have failed
 To pulle a rose of all that route
 To beren in myn honde aboute,
 And smellen to it where I wente ;
 But ever I dredde me to repente, 1670
 And leste it grevede on forthought
 The lord that thilké gardyn wrought.
 Of roses ther were greté wone,
 So fairé waxé never in rone.
 Of knoppes clos some sawe I there,
 And some wel beter woxen were ;
 And some ther ben of other moysoun,
 That drowé nygh to her sesoun,
 And spedde hem fasté forto sprede.
 I lové well sich roses rede, 1680

1595. *he* is the indefinite pronoun, *i.e.* 'one' ;
cp. note to v. 1540.

1604. *i.e.* to lie dead ; cp. *Tales*, D 768.

1608. MSS. *laughynge*.

1610. Perhaps we should read *l' - bleint*,
deceived ; Fr. 'mis en rage.'

1673. *of newe*, anew.

1621. *panter*s, cp. *Leg. of G. W.* 131.

1641. MSS. *sighide*, cp. *l'art. of F.* 404.

1666. *My thankis* (G *Me thankis*), for my
part.

1666. MSS. *wote*.

1673. *wone*, abundance, seems to be plural ;
cp. *Zupitza's Guy of Warwick*, 10320.

1674. *rone* seems to be a northern word mean-
ing 'bush.' Fr. 'sous claus.'

For brode roses and open also
 Ben passéd in a day or two,
 But knoppés wille [a]l freshe be
 Two dayés atté leest or thre.
 The knoppés gretly liked me,
 For fairer may ther no man se.
 Whó-so myght have oon of all,
 It ought hym ben full lief withall ;
 Might I gerlond of hem geten,
 For no richesse I wolde it leten. 1690
 Among the knoppes I chese oon
 So faire, that of the remenaunt noon
 Ne preise I half so well as it,
 Whanne I avise it in my wit.
 For it so well was enlumýned
 With colour reed, [and] as well fyned
 As nature couthe it maké faire ;
 And it hath levés wel foure paire,
 That kynde hath sett thorough his knowyng
 Aboute the redé roses spryngyng. 1700
 The stalké was as rishé right,
 And theron stode the knoppe upright,
 That it ne bowide upon no side.
 The swoté smellé spronge so wide,
 That it dide all the place aboute.
 Whanne I haddesmelled thesavour swote,
 No will hadde I fro thens yit goo ;
 Bot somdell ncer it wente I thoo
 To take it, but myn hond for drede
 Ne dorste I to the rosé bede 1710
 For thesteles sharpe of many maneeres,
 Nettles, thornes, and hokede breres ;
 For myché they distourbled me,
 That sore I dradde to harméd be.
 The God of Love with bowé bent,
 That all day sette hadde his talent
 To pursuen and to spien me,
 Was stondyng by a figé tree.
 And whanne he sawé how that I
 Hadde chosen so ententifly 1720
 The bothoun more unto my paie

1683. MSS. omit *al*; Fr. 'tuit frois.'

1705. *aboute*, Fr. 'replenist.' Skeat and Kaluza think that the Chaucerian part of the translation ends here; but it is possible that the absence of rhyme is due to a later alteration of a rhyme like *swete*, vb., with *swete*, adj.; or *replete* with *swete* (*replete*, vb., is given in Levin's rhyme-list).

1713. *For*, Skeat reads *ful*, Kaluza *Over*, but no change is necessary.

1714. *That* (MSS. *For*), Fr. 'Que.'

1721. From this point 'botoun', hitherto translated by *knoppe*, is rendered *bothoun* (= 'button')

Than any other that I say,
 He toke an arowe full sharply whette,
 And in his bowe whanne it was sette,
 He straight up to his eré drough
 The strongé bowe, that was so tough,
 And shette att me so wondir smerte,
 That thorough myn ye unto myn herte
 The takel smote, and depe it wente.
 And therwith-all such coldemehente, 1730
 That, under clothés warme and softe,
 Sithen that day I have chevered ofte.
 Whanne I was hurt thus, in [a] stounde
 I felle doun platte unto the grounde ;
 Myn herté failed and feynted ay,
 And longé tyme a-swoone I lay.
 But whanne I come out of swounyng,
 And haddé witt and my felyng,
 I was all maate, and wende full well
 Of bloode have loren a full gret dell. 1740
 But certes the arowe that in me stode
 Of me ne drewe no drope of blode,
 For why I founde my wounde all dreye.
 Thanne toke I with myn hondis tweie
 The arowe, and ful fast out it plight,
 And in the pullyng sore I sight ;
 So at the last the shaft of tree
 I drough out with the fethers thre
 But yet the hokede heed y-wis,
 The which that Beaute callid is, 1750
 Gan so depe in myn herté pace
 That I it myghté nought arace ;
 But in myn herté still it stode.
 Al bledde I not a drope of blode.
 I was bothe anguyssous and trouble
 For the perill that I sawe double.
 I nysté what to seye or do,
 Ne gete a leche my woundis to ;
 For neithir thorough gras ne rote
 Ne hadde I helpe of hope ne bote. 1760
 But to the bothoun evermo
 Myn herté drewe, for all my wo ;
 My thought was in noon other thing,
 For hadde it ben in my kepyng,
 It wolde have brought my lyf agayn.

in the curious form *bothoun*. Kaluza sees in this the evidence of a new translator. If so, the new part probably begins at v. 1715. After this the translation becomes more diffuse, the rhymes have a northern colouring, and the verses more frequently begin with an accented syllable.

1733. *in a stounde*, 'tantost.'

1750. *that*, MSS. *it*.

For certis evenly, I dar wel seyn,
 The sight onoly and the savour
 Alegged mych of my langour.
 Thanne gan I forto drawe me
 Toward the bothon faire to se. 1770
 And Love hadde gete hym in this throwe
 Another arowe into his bowe,
 And forto shete gan hym dresse;
 The arowis name was Symplesse.
 And whanne that Love gan nygheme mere,
 He drowe it up withouten were,
 And shette at me with all his myght;
 So that this arowe anon right
 Thourghout [myn] eigh, as it was founde,
 Into myn herte hath maad a wounde. 1780
 Thanne I anon dide al my craft,
 For to drawn out the shafte;
 And therwith-all I sighede ofte,
 But in myn herte the heed was lefte,
 Which ay enceside my desire,
 Unto the bothon drawe nere.
 And evermo that me was woo,
 The more desir hadde I to goo
 Unto the roser, where that grewe
 The freysshé bothon so bright of hewe.
 Bétir me were to have laten be, 1791
 But it bihovede nedé me
 To done right as myn herte badde,
 For evere the body must be ladde
 Afir the herte, in wele and woo;
 Of force togidre they must goo.
 But never this archer woldé feyne
 To shete at me with all his peyne.
 And forto make me to hym mete,
 The thriddle arowe he gan to shete, 1800
 Whanne best his tyme he myght espie,
 The which was named Curtesie.
 Into myn herte it dide avale.
 A-swoone I fell bothe deed and pale,
 Long tyme I lay and stiréd nought,
 Till I abraide out of my thought.
 And faste thanne I avysede me

1766. *evenly*, equally; cp. v. 5280. There is no *certes* in Fr.

1776. *withouten were*, Fr. 'sans menacier,'

? without warning.

1791. *laten*, let.

1794-5-6. Seems to be a quotation; not in Fr.; cp. vv. 2034 ff.

1797, 1798. *feyne*, *peyne* (Thyn. *fyne*, *pyne*). Either an assonance or *fyne*, *peine*; cp. vv. 1785, 1786, *desire*, *vere*.

To drawe out the shafte of tree;
 But evere the heed was left bihynde,
 For ought I couthe pulle or wynde. 1810
 So sore it stikid whanne I was hit,
 That by no craft I myght it flit.
 But anguyssous and full of thought
 I felt sich woo my wounde ay wrought,
 That somonede me alway to goo
 Toward the rose, that plesede me soo.
 But I ne durste in no manere,
 Bicause the archer was so nere;
 'For evermore gladly,' as I rede,
 'Brent child of fier hath myche drede.'
 And certis yit, for al my peyne, 1821
 Though that I sigh yit arwis reyne,
 And grounde quarels sharpe of steele,
 Ne for no payne that I myght feele,
 Yit myght I not my-silf witholde
 The faire roser to biholde.
 For Love me yaf sich hardement
 For to fulfille his comaundement,
 Upon my fete I rose up thanne,
 Féeble as a forwoundid man, 1830
 And forth to gon [my] myght I sette,
 And for the archer nolde I lette.
 Toward the roser fast I drowe,
 But thornés sharpe mo than ynowe
 Ther were, and also thistels thikke
 And brerés brymmé forto prikke,
 That I ne myghté gete grace
 The rowé thornés forto passe,
 To sene the roses fresshe of hewe.
 I must abide, though it me rewe, 1840
 The hegge aboute so thikké was,
 That closide the roses in compas.
 But o thing lykéd me right wele;
 I was so nygh I myghté fele
 Of the bothon the swote odour,
 And also se the fresshe colour.
 And that right gretly likéd me,
 That I so neer myght it se.
 Sich joie anon therof hadde I,
 That I forgate my maladie; 1850
 To sene I haddé siché delit,

1814. MSS. *lefte*; Skeat proposed *felte*.

1842. *closeid* is but one syllable.

1848. *neer*, either an adverbial form *neve*, from O.F. *neor* with adv. *-e*, or a scribe's mistake for *nerve*; Skeat reads *it myght*.

1851. Skeat's emendation, *it hadde I*, is perhaps right.

Of sorwe and angre I was al quyte,
 And of my woundes that I hadde thore.
 For no thing liken me myght more
 Than dwellen by the roser ay,
 And thenuës never to passe away.
 But whanne a while I hadde be thare,
 The god of Love, which alto-share
 Myn hertë with his arwis kene,
 Cast hym to yeve me woundis grene.
 He shette at me full hastily 1861
 An arwe namèd Company,
 The whichè takell is full able
 To make these ladies merciable.
 Thanne I anoon gan chaungen hewe
 For grevaunce of my woundè newe,
 That I agayn fell in swounyng,
 And sighède sore in compleynyng.
 Soore I compleyned that my sore
 On me gan greven more and more. 1870
 I hadde noon hope of allegeaunce ;
 So nygh I drowe to desperaunce,
 I roughté [ne] of deth ne lyf.
 Whether that Love wolde me dryf,
 Yf me a martir wolde he make,
 I myght his power nought forsake.
 And while for anger thus I woke,
 The God of Love an arowe toke ;
 Ful sharpe it was and [ful] pugnaunt.
 And it was callid Faire Semblaunt, 1880
 The which in no wise wole consente,
 That ony lover hym repente
 To serve his love with herte and all
 For ony perill that may bifall.
 But though this arwe was kenè grounde,
 As ony rasour that is founde
 To kutte and kervè, at the poynt
 The God of Love it hadde anoynt
 With a precious oynement,
 Soudell to yeve aleggèment 1890
 Upon the woundès that he hadde
 Through the body in my herte made,
 To helpe her sorès and to cure,
 And that they may the bette endure.
 But yit this arwe, withoutè more,
 Made in myn herte a largè sore,

1853, 1854. *thore*, *more*, northern rhyme ;
 perhaps *thare*, *mare* ; cp. 1857.

1873. MSS. *rough of deth ne of lyf*.

1874. *if heder*, whither.

1892. As in Thynne. G *That he hadde the
 body hole made* written later over blank line.

That in full grete peyne I abode.
 But ay the oynement wente abrode,
 Thourgh-oute my woundès large and wide
 It spredde aboute in every side. 1900
 Through whos vertu and whos myght
 Myn hertë joyfull was and light ;
 I hadde ben deed and alto-shent
 But for the precious oynement.
 The shaft I drowe out of the arwe,
 Roukyng for wo right wondir narwe,
 Bút the heel, which made me smerte,
 Léfte bihyndè in myn herte
 With other foure, I dar wel say,
 That never wole be take away. 1910
 Bút the oynement halpe me wele ;
 And yit sich sorwè dide I fele
 That al day I chaungèd hewe
 Of my woundès fresshe and newe.
 As men myght se in my visage,
 The arwis were so full of rage,
 So variaunt of diversitee,
 That men in everiche myght se
 Bothe gret anoy, and eke swetnesse
 And joic meynt with bittirnesse. 1920
 Now were they esy, now were they wode,
 In hem I felte bothe harme and goode ;
 Now sore without aleggèment,
 Now softyng with the oynement ;
 It softed heere and prikked there,
 Thus ese and anger to-gidre were.
 The God of Love delyverly
 Come lepande to me hastily,
 And seicd to me in gret rape,
 ' Yelde thee, for thou may not escape,
 May no defence availe thee heere ; 1931
 Therefore I rede make no daungere,
 If thou wolt yelde thee hastily.
 Thou shalt [the] rather have mercy.
 He is a foole in sikernesse,
 That with daunger or stoutenesse
 Rebelligith there that he shulde plesè ;
 In sich folye is litel ese.
 Be meke where thou must nedis bowe,
 To stryve ageyn is nought thi prowè ;
 Côme at oones and have y-doo, 1941
 For I wole that it be soo.
 Thanne yelde thee heere debonairly.'

1925. MSS. *softened* . . . *prikkeith*. *Softed*,
 became less violent.

1940. *nought thi prowè*, not to thy advantage.

And I answerid ful hombly :
 ' Gláðly sir at youre biddyng
 I wole me yelde in allé thyng ;
 To youre servýse I wole me take,
 For god defende that I shulde make
 Ageyn youre biddyng résistence,
 I wole not don so grete offence. 1950
 For if I dide, it were no skile ;
 Ye may do with me what ye wile,
 Save or spille and also sloo.
 Fro you in no wise may I goo,
 My lyf, my deth is in youre honde,
 I may not laste out of youre bonde ;
 Pleyn at youre lyst I yeldé me,
 Hopyng in herte that sumtyme ye
 Comfort and esé shall me sende,
 Or ellis shortly, this is the cende, 1960
 Withouten helthe I mote ay dure,
 But if ye take me to youre cure,
 Comfort or helthe how shuld I have,
 Sith ye me hurt, but ye me save ?
 The helthe of lovè mot be founde
 Where as they token firste her wounde.
 And if ye lyst of me to make
 Yourre prisoner, I wole it take
 Of herte and willfully at gree ;
 Hoolly and pleyn y yeldé me, 1970
 Withouté feynyng or feyntise,
 To be governed by youre emprise.
 Of you I heré so mych pris,
 I wole ben hool at youre devis
 Forto fulfillé youre lykyng,
 And repenté for no thyng,
 Hopyng to have yit in some tide
 The mercy of that I abide.'
 And with that covenaut yelde I me,
 Anoon down knelyng upon my kne, 1980
 Proferyng fortó kisse his feete.
 But for no thyng he wolde me lete,
 And seide, ' I love thee bothe and preise,
 Sens that thyn answer doth me ese,
 For thou answerid so curteisly.
 For now I wote wel uttirly

That thou art gentyll by thi speche ;
 For, though a man fer woldé seche,
 He shulde not fynden in certeyn
 No sich answer of no vileyn, 1990
 For sich a word ne myghté nought
 Isé out of a vilayns thought.
 Thou shalt not lesen of thi speche,
 For [to] thy helpyng wole I eche,
 And eke encreasen that I may.
 But first I wole that thou obaye
 Fully for thyn avauntage,
 Anoon to do me heere homage ;
 And sithé kisse thou shalt my mouthe,
 Which to no vilayn was never couthe
 Forto aproche it ne fortó touche. 2000
 For sauff of cherlis I ne vouche
 That they shall never neigh it nere ;
 For curteis and of faire manere,
 Well taught and full of gentilnesse,
 He musté ben that shal me kysse ;
 And also of full high fraunchise,
 That shal atteyne to that emprise.
 And first of o thing warne I thee,
 That peyne and gret adversite 2010
 He mote endure, and eke travaille,
 That shal me serve withouté faile.
 But ther ageyns thee to comforte,
 And with thi servise to desporte,
 Thou mayst full glad and joyfull be
 So good a maister to have as me,
 And lord of so high renoun.
 I bere of love the gounfounoun,
 Of curtesie the banere.
 For I am of the silf manere, 2020
 Géntil, curteys, meke, and fre,
 That who ever ententyf be
 Mé to honouré, doute, and serve,
 Néde it that he hym observe
 Fro trespasse and fro vilanye,
 And hym governe in curtesie
 With will and with entencioun.
 For whanne he first in my prisoun
 Is caught, thanne must he uttirly
 Fro thennes forth full bisily 2030

1960. *this is*, pronounce 'this.'

1965. Cp. note to 1540.

1976. Fr. 'Ge ne m'en puis de riens doloir.'

Perhaps *Me repenté*.

1978. MSS. *Mercy*; but Fr. 'la merci que j'entens.'

1983. Fr. 'moult.' So probably *moche* instead of *bothé*.

2016. Read *t'have*.

2024. *Néde is*, MSS. And also. 'Dedans lui ne puet demorer Vilomnie ne mesprison Ne nule mauvese aprison.' 'Aprison,' instruction, seems to have been confused with 'aprisonnier,' 'to make prisoner,' hence vv. 2028-2032, to which there is nothing corresponding in Fr.

Caste hym gentyll forto bee
 If he desiré helpe of me.
 Anoon withoute more delay,
 Withouten daunger or affray,
 I bicom his man anoon,
 And gave hym thankés many a oon,
 And knelide down with hondis joynt,
 And made it in my port full quoint.
 The joye wente to myn herté rote, 2039
 Whanne I hadde kissed his mouth so swote;
 I hadde sich myrthe and sich likyng
 It curéd me of langwysching.
 He askide of me thanne hostages.
 'I have,' he seide, 'taken fele homages
 Of oon and other, where I have bene
 Disceyved ofte withouten wene.
 These felouns full of falsite
 Have many sithes biguyléd me,
 And through falschede her lust achieved,
 Wherof I repente and am agreved. 2050
 And I hem gete in my daungere,
 Her falschede shull they bie full dere!
 But for I love thee, I seie thee pleyn,
 I wole of thee be more certeyn.
 For thee so sore I wole now bynde,
 That thou away ne shalt not wynde
 Forto denyen the covenaut
 Or don that is not avenaut.
 That thou were fals it were gret reuthe,
 Sith thou semest so full of treuthe.' 2060
 'Sire, if thee lyst to undirstande,
 I mérveile the askyng this demande.
 For why or wherfore shuldé ye
 Ostáges, or borwis aske of me,
 Or ony other sikirnesse,
 Sith ye wote in sothfastnesse
 That ye have me suspiréd so,
 And holt myn herté taken me fro,
 That it wole do for me no thing
 But if it be at youre biddyng; 2070
 Myn herte is youre and myn right nought
 As it bihoveth in dede and thought,
 Rédy in all to worche youre will,
 Whether so turne to good or ill.
 So sore it lustith you to plesse,
 No man therof may you desese.

Ye have theron sette sich justice,
 That it is werreid in many wise.
 And if ye doute it nolde obeye,
 Ye may therof do make a keye, 2080
 And holde it with you for ostage.'
 'Now certis this is noon outrage,'
 Quod Love, 'and fully I acorde;
 For of the body he is full lord
 That hath the herte in his tresour;
 Outrage it were to asken more.'
 Thanne of his awmener he drough
 A litell keye, fetys snowgh,
 Which was of gold polisschéd clere; 2089
 And seide to me, 'With this keye heere
 Thyn herte to me now wole I shette;
 For all my jowell, loke and knette,
 I bynde undir this litel keye,
 That no wight may carie aweye.
 This keye is full of gret poste.'
 With which anoon he touchide me
 Under the side full softly,
 That he myn herté sodcynly
 Without anyé haddé sperd, 2099
 That yit right nought it hath me dered.
 Whanne he hadde don his will al oute,
 And I hadde putte hym out of doute,
 'Sire,' I seide, 'I have right gret wille
 Your lust and plesaunce to fulfille.
 Loke ye my servise take atte gree
 By thilké feith ye owe to me.
 I seye nought for recreaundise,
 For I nought doute of youre servise,
 But the servaunt traveileth in vayne,
 That forto serven doth his payne 2110
 Unto that lord which in no wise
 Kan hym no thank for his servise.'
 Lóvé seide, 'Dismaie thee nought,
 Syn thou for sokour hast me sought;
 In thank thi servise wole I take
 And high of gre I wole thee make,
 If wikkidnesse ne hyndre thee;
 But as I hope it shal nought be,
 To worshiþe no wight by aventure
 May come, but if he peyne endure; 2120
 Abide and suffre thy distresse
 That hurtith now; it shal be lesse.

2038. *it in, (?) in it, i.e. in doing it.*2051. *And, if.*2051. *in my daungere*; cp. v. 1470.2074. *Whether*, monosyllable 'wher'; cp. 2128.2077. *justice*, punishment.2078. *werreid*, persecuted; cp. vv. 3251, 6264, 6926.

2084, 2085. Cp. vv. 1794 ff.

2116. MSS. *degre*.

I wote my silf what may thee save,
 What medycyne thou woldist have;
 And if thi trouthe to me thou kepe,
 I shal unto thyn helpyng eke,
 To cure thy woundes and make hem clene,
 Where so they be olde or grene;
 Thou shalt be holpen at wordis fewe.
 For certeynly thou shalt well shewe 2130
 Where that thou servest with good will
 Forto accomplysshen and fulfille
 My comaundementis day and nyght
 Whiche I to lovers yeve of right.
 'Ah Sire, for goddis love,' seide I,
 'Er ye passe hens ententyfly,
 Voure comaundementis to me ye say,
 And I shall kepe hem if I may.
 For hem to kepen is all my thought.
 And if so be I wote hem nought, 2140
 Thanne may I [erre] unwityngly.
 Wherefore I pray you entierly,
 With all myn herté me to lere,
 That I trespassse in no manere.'
 The God of Love thanne chargide me,
 Anoon as ye shall here and see,
 Worde by worde by right emprise,
 So as the Romance shall devise.
 The maister lesith his tyme to lere
 Whanne the disciple wole not here; 2150
 It is but veyn on hym to swynke
 That on his lernyng wole not thynke.
 Who so luste love, late hym entende,
 For now the Romance bigynneth to
 amende;
 Now is good to here in fay
 If any be that can it say,
 And poynte it as the resoun is.
 Set forth [an] other gate ywys,
 It shall nought well in allé thyng
 Be brought to good undirstondyng. 2160
 For a rede that poyntith ille
 A good sentence may ofté spille.
 The book is good at the eendyng
 Máad of newe and lusty thyng.

2141. *erre* (MSS. omit), 'issir de la voie' (Urry's emendation).

2149-2152. Should come after 2144 if we follow Fr. original.

2154. *bigynneth to amende*. If the reading of the text is retained it must be *gynnith l'amende*. As Fr. is 'des or amende,' perhaps we should read *wote amende*.

For who so wole the eendyng here,
 The crafte of love he shall mowe lere,
 If that ye wole so long abide
 Tyl I this Romance may unhide,
 And undo the signifiante
 Of this dreame into Romance. 2170
 The sothfastnesse that now is hidde
 Without coverture shall be kidde,
 Whanne I undon have this dremyng,
 Wherynne no word is of lesyng.
 'Vylanye at the bigynnyng
 I wole,' sayde Love, 'over alle thyng
 Thou levé, if thou wolt nought be
 Fals and trespassse ageyns me.
 I curse and blamé generaly
 All hem that loven vilanye. 2180
 For vilanye makith vilayn,
 And by his dedis a cherle is seyn.
 Thise vilayns arn withouten pitee,
 Fréndshipec, love, and all bounte.
 I nyl resseyve unto my servise
 Hem that ben vilayns of emprise.
 But undirstonde in thyn entent
 That this is not myn entement,
 To clepe no wight in noo ages
 Oonly gentill for his lynages. 2190
 But who so [that] is vertuous,
 And in his port nought outrageous,
 Whanne sich oon thou seest thee biforn,
 Thóugh he be not gentill born,
 Thou maist well seyn this is in soth,
 That he is gentil by cause he doth
 As longeth to a gentilman,
 Of hym noon other deme I can.
 For certeynly withouten drede
 A cherle is deméd by his dede 2200
 Of hic or lowe, as ye may see,
 Or of what kynrede that he be.
 Ne say nought, for noon yvel wille,
 Thyng that is to holden stille;
 It is no worshipec to mysseye,
 Thou maist ensample take of Keye,
 That was somtyme, for myssciyng,
 Hátet bothe of olde and ying.
 As fer as Gaweyn the worthy
 Was preiséd for his curtesie, 2210
 Kay was hated, for he was fell,

2185-2202. Not in Fr. It bears some resemblance to *Cant. Tales*, D 1109.

2188. *this is*, read *this*.

Of word disputous and cruell.
 Wherefore be wise and aqueyntable,
 Goodly of word and resonable,
 Bothe to lesse and eke to mare.
 And whanne thou comest there men are,
 Loke that thou have in custome ay
 First to salve hym, if thou may ;
 And if it fall that of hem somme
 Salve thee first, be not domme, 2220
 But quyte hym curteisly anoon,
 Without abidyng, er they goon.
 For no thyng eke thy tunge applye
 To speke wordis of rebaudrye ;
 To vilayne speche in no degre
 Late never thi lippe unbounden be,
 For I nought holde hym, in good feith,
 Curteys that foulé wordis scith.
 And allé wymmen serve and preise,
 And to thy power her honour reise ; 2230
 And if that ony myssaieere
 Dispeise wymmen, that thou maist here,
 Blame hym and bidde hym holde hym stille.
 And set thy myght, and all thy wille,
 Wymmen and ladies forto please,
 And to do thyng that may hem ese,
 That they ever speke good of thee ;
 For so thou maist best prised be.
 Loke fro pride thou kepe thee wele,
 For thou maist bothe perceyve and fele,
 That pride is bothe foly and synne. 2241
 And he that pride hath hym withynne,
 Ne may his herte in no wise
 Meken ne souplen to servyse.
 For pride is founde in every part
 Contrarie unto lovés art,
 And he that loveth trew[é]lly
 Shulde hym contené jolily
 Withouté pride in sondry wise,
 And hym disgysen in queyntise ; 2250
 For queynte array withouté drede
 Is no thyng proude, who takith hede ;
 For fresh array, as men may see,
 Withouté pride may ofté be.
 Mayntene thy silf afir thi rent,
 Of robe and eke of garnément :
 For many sithé faire clothyng
 A man amendith in mych thyng.
 And loke alwey that they be shape,
 What garnément that thou shalt make,

2230. *to thy power*, according to thy power.

Of hym that kan [hem] besté do 2261
 With all that perteyneth therto.
 Poyntis and slevés be well sittande,
 Right and streght on the hande ;
 Of shone and bootés newe and faire,
 Loke at the leest thou have a paire,
 And that they sitte so fetisly,
 That thesè ruyde may uttirly
 Merveyle, sith that they sitte so pley[n],
 How they come on or off ageyn. 2270
 Were streitè gloves with awmere
 Of silk, and alwey with good chere
 Thou yeve, if thou have [gret] richesse ;
 And if thou have nought, spende the lesse.
 Alwey be mery, if thou may,
 But wasté not thi good alway.
 Have hatte of floures as fresh as May,
 Chapelett of roses of Wissonday ;
 For sich array ne costneth but lite.
 Thyn hondis wasshe, thy teeth make white,
 And lete no filthe upon thee be ; 2281
 Thy nailés blak if thou maist see,
 Voide it away delyverly ;
 And kembe thyn heed right jolily.
 Farce not thi visage in no wise,
 For that of love is not themprise,
 For love doth haten, as I fynde,
 A beaute that cometh not of kynde.
 Alwey in herte, I redé thee,
 Glád and mery forto be ; 2290
 And be as joyfull as thou can,
 Love hath no joye of sorowful man.
 That yvell is full of curtesie
 That lowith in his maladie.
 For ever of love the sikénesse
 Is meynde with swete and bitternesse.
 The sore of love is merveilous,
 For now [is] the lovér joyous,
 Now can he pleyne, now can he grone,
 Now can he syngen, now maken mone ;
 To day he pleyne[n]th for hevynesse, 2301
 To morowe he pleyeth for jolynesse.
 The lyf of love is full contrarie,
 Which stounde-mele can ofté varie.

2271. *awmere*, same as *awmener*, v. 2087 above.

2273. MSS. omit *gret* ; Fr. 'grant richesse.'

2285. *Farce*, paint ; variant form of *farde*.

2293. *That yvell*, that sick man.

2294. MSS. *knowith*, but Fr. 'L'en en iit (Kal.).'

2302. *pleyeth*, MSS. *pleyneth*.

Bút if thou canst mirthis make,
That men in gre wole gladly take,
Do it goodly, I comaunde thee.
For men shulde, where so evere they be,
Do thing that [to] hem sityng is ;
For therof cometh good loos and pris.
Where-of that thou be vertuous 2311
Ne be not straunge ne daungerous,
For if that thou good ridere be,
Prike gladly that men may [the] se.
In armés also, if thou konne,
Pursue tyl thou a name hast wonne.
And if thy voice be faire and clere
Thou shalt make [no] gret daungere
Whanne to synge they goodly prey,
It is thi worship fortobeye. 2320
Also to you it longith ay
To harpe and gitterne, daunce and play ;
For if he can wel foote and daunce,
It may hym greetly do avaunce.
Among eke, for thy lady sake.
Songes and complayntes [se] that thou
make,

For that wole meven in her herte,
Whanne they reden of thy smerte.
Loke that no man for scarce thee holde,
For that may greve thee many folde ;
Resoun wole that a lover be 2331
In his yiftes more large and fre
Than cherles that kan naught of lovyng.
For who therof can ony thyng,
He shall be leef ay forto yeve,
In lovés lore who so wolde leve.
For he that through a sodeyn sight,
Or for a kyssyng, anon right
Yaff hoolé his herte in will and thought,
And to hym silf kepith fight nought,
Aftir swich gift is good resoun 2341
He yeve his good [al] in abandon.

Now wole I shortly heere reherce
Of that I have seid in verce

2311. *vertuous*, skilled.

2323. *he*, indefinite.

2323. *foote*. Kal. suggests *flout* because *foot* (*saltare*) is a later word.

2325. *Among*, i.e. from time to time.

2333. *MSS. ben not*. See next verse.

2336. *MSS. londes*.

2341. *swich gift*, Kal. for *this swift it of* MSS. Perhaps *After so riche gift*, Fr. 'Après si riche don.'

2342. *MSS. omit al*. Fr. 'tout a bandon.'

Al the sentence by and by,
In wordis fewe compendiously,
That thou the bet mayst on hem thynke,
Whether so it be thou wake or wyne.
For the wordis litel greve
A man to kepe, whanne it is breve. 2350
Who so with love wole goon or ride,
He mote be curteis and voide of pride,
Méry, and full of jolite,
And of largesse alosed be.
Firste I joyne thee heere in penaunce
That evere, withouté répentance,
Thou sette thy thought in thy lovyng
To laste withouté répenting,
And thenke upon thi myrthis swete,
That shall folowe aftir, whan ye mete.
And for thou trewe to love shalt be, 2361
I wole, and comaundé thee
That in oo place thou sette all hoolé
Thyn herte, withouté halfen doole
Of trecherie and sikernesse ;
For I lovede nevere doublenesse.
To many his herte that wole departe,
Everiche shal have but litel parte ;
But of hym drede I me right nought
That in oo placé settith his thought. 2370
Therefore in oo place it sette,
And lat it nevere thennys flette.
For if thou yevest it in lenyng,
I holde it but a wrecchid thyng.
Therefore yeve it hoolé and quyte,
And thou shalt have the more merite ;
If it be lent, than aftir soone
The bounte and the thank is doone,
Bút in love fre yeven thing
Requyrith a gret guerdonyng. 2380
Yeve it in yift al quyte fully,
And make thi yifte debonairly,
For men that yifte holde moré dere
That yeven [is] with gladsome chere.
That yifte nought to preisen is
That man yeveth maugre his.
Whanne thou hast yeven thyn herte, as I
Have seid [to] thee heere openly,
Thanne aventurés shull thee fall

2349. *wordis*, perhaps read *word is*, 'la parole.'

2355. *joyne*, enjoin. *MSS. that heere*, but Fr. 't'enjoing en penitence.'

2365. *Of trecherie*, etc. (*MSS. For trecherie*) i.e. half treacherous, half faithful.

2386. *maugre his*, in spite of himself.

Which harde and hevye ben with-all. 2390
 For ofte, whan thou bithenkist thee
 Of thy lovyng, where so thou be,
 Fro folk thou must departe in hie,
 That noon perceyve thi maladie.
 But hyde thyne harme thou must alone,
 And go forthe sole, and make thy mone.
 Thou shalte no whyle be in o state,
 But whylom colde and whilom hate,
 Nowe reed as rose, now yelow and fade.
 Suche sorowe I trowe thou never hade ;
 Côtidien, ne quarteyne, 2401
 It is nat so ful of peyne.
 For often tymès it shal fal
 In love, among thy paynès al,
 That thou thy selfe al holy
 Foryeten shalte so utterly,
 That many tymès thou shalte be
 Styl as an ymage of tree,
 Domme as a stone, without steryng
 Of fote or honde, without spekyng. 2410

Than, soone after al thy payne,
 To memorye shalte thou come agayne,
 A man abasshed wonder sore,
 And after syghen more and more.
 For wytte thou wele, withouten wene,
 In suche astate ful ofte have bene,
 That have the yvel of love assayde,
 Whérthrough thou arte so dismayde.
 After a thought shal take the so,
 That thy love is to ferre the fro ; 2420
 Thoushaltesaye "God ! What maythis be
 That I ne maye my lady se ?
 Myne herte alone is to her go,
 And I abyde al sole in wo,
 Departed fro myne owné thought,
 And with myne eyen se right nought.

Alas ! myne eyen send I ne may
 My careful hertè to convey !
 Myne hertès gydè but they be,
 I prayse nothyng what ever they se. 2430
 Shul they abyde than ? nay,
 But gone visyten without delay,
 Thát myne herte desyareth so.
 For certainly, but if they go,
 A foole my selfe I maye wel holde,

2395-2442. Thynne is the only authority here, the MS. lacking a leaf.

2416. Subject omitted as in 2367.

2427. Th. *sene* for *send* ; Fr. 'enoverier.'

2432. Th. *gone* and *visyten*.

Whan I ne se what myne hert wolde.
 Wherefore I wol gone her to sene,
 For eased shal I never bene,
 Bút I have some tokenyng."

Thangost thou forthe without dwellyng.
 But ofte thou faylest of thy desyre, 2441
 Er thou mayst come her any nere,
 And wastest in vayn thi passage.
 Thanne fallest thou in a newe rage ;
 For want of sight, thou gynnest morne,
 And homeward pensyf thou dost retorne.
 In greet myscheef thanne shalt thou bee,
 For thanne agayne shall come to thee
 Sighes and pleyntes with newe woo,
 Thát no yecchyng prikketh soo. 2450
 Who wote it nought, he may go lere
 Of hem that bien love so dere.

No thyng thyn herte appesen may
 That ofte thou wole goon and assay,
 If thou maist seen by aventure
 Thi lyvès joy, thine hertis cure.
 So that bi gracè if thou myght
 Atteyne of hire to have a sight,
 Thanne shalt thou done noon other dede,
 But with that sight thyne eyen fedde. 2460
 That fairè fresh whanne thou maist see,
 Thyne hertè shall so ravysshed be,
 That nevere thou woldest, thi thankis, lete
 Ne rémove forto see that swete.
 The more thou seest, in sothfastnesse,
 The more thou coveytest of that swetnesse ;
 The more thine hertè brenneth in fier,
 The more thine herte is in desire.

For who considreth everydeell,
 It may be likned wondir well 2470
 The peyne of love unto a fere.
 For evermore thou neighst nere,
 Thou or whoo so that it bee,
 For verray sothe I tell it thee,
 The hatter evere shall thou brenne,
 As experiencè shall thee kenne.
 Where so comest in any coost,
 Who is next fuyre he brenneth moost.
 And yitt forsothe for all thine hete,
 Though thou for love swelte and swete,
 Ne for no thyng thou felen may, 2481
 Thou shalt not willen to passen away.

2463. *thi thankis*, willingly.

2477. Supply *thou*.

2478. *next*, nearest.

And though thou go, yitt must thee nede
 Thenke allé day on hir fairhede,
 Whom thou biheelde with so good wille,
 And holde thi silf biguyldé ille
 That thou ne haddest noon hardément
 To shewe hir ought of thyne entent.
 Thyn herte full sore thou wolt dispise,
 And eke repreve of cowardise, 2490
 That thou, so dulle in every thing,
 Were domme for drede withoute spekyng.
 Thou shalt eke thenke thou didest folye,
 That thou were hir so fasté bye,
 And durst not aunte the to say
 Sóm thyng er thou cam away.
 Fór thou haddist nomore wonne,
 To speke of hir whanne thou bigonne,
 But yitt she woldé, for thy sake,
 In armés goodly thee have take, 2500
 It shulde have be more worth to thee
 Thán of tresour gret plente.
 Thus shalt thou morne and eke compleyne,
 And gete enchesoun to goone ageyne
 Unto the walke, or to the place
 Where thou biheelde hir fleshly face.
 And never, for fals suspeccioun,
 Thou woldest fynde occasioun
 Fórto gone unto hire hous.
 Só art thou thanne desirous 2510
 Á sight of hir forto have,
 If thou thine honour myghtist save,
 Or ony erande myghtist make,
 Thider for thi lovés sake
 Full fayn thou woldist, but for drede
 Thou gost not, lest that men take hede.
 Wherefore I red [the] in thi goyng
 And also in thyne ageyn comyng,
 Thou be well ware that men ne wite ;
 Feyne thee other cause than itte 2520
 To go that weye or fasté bye ;
 To helé wel is no folye.
 And if so be it happé thee,
 That thou thi lové there maist see,
 In siker wise thou hir salewe,
 Wherewith thi colour wole transmewe,
 And eke thy blode shal alto quake,
 Thyne hewe eke chaungen for hir sake ;

2497. The French suggests that we should supply *though* before *thou* and read *that for yitt* in v. 2490.

2517. Cp. *I rede the* in v. 2856.

2522. *hele*, conceal.

But word and witte with chere full pale
 Shull wante [the] forto tell thy tale. 2530
 And if thou maist so fer forth wyne,
 That thou [thi] resoun doist bigynne,
 And woldist seyn thine thingis or mo,
 Thou shalt full scarsly seyn the two.
 Though thou bihenke thee never so well,
 Thou shalt foryeté yit somdell,
 But if thou dele with trecherie ;
 For fals lovers mowe all folye
 Seyn what hem lust withouten drede,
 They be so double in her falskede ; 2540
 For they in herte kunne thenke a thyng,
 And seyn another in her spekyng.
 And whanne thi speche is eendid all,
 Ryght thus to thee it shall byfall,
 If ony word thanne come to mynde
 That thou to seye hast left bihynde.
 Thanne thou shalt brenne in gret martire,
 For thou shalt bienne as ony fiere,
 This is the stryf and eke the affray,
 And the batell that lastith ay ; 2550
 This bargeyn cende may never take,
 But if that she thi pees will make.
 And whanne the nyght is comen anon,
 A thousande angres shall come uppon.
 To bedde as fast thou wolt thee dight,
 Where thou shalt have but smal delite ;
 For whanne thou wenest forto slepe
 So full of peyné shalt thou crepe,
 Sterte in thi bedde aboute full wide,
 And turne full ofte on every side, 2560
 Now downward groff and now upright,
 And walowe in woo the longé nyght ;
 Thine armys shalt thou sprede abrede
 As man in werre were forwerede.
 Thanne shall thee come a remembraunce
 Óf hir shappe and hir semblaunce,
 Where to none other may be pere.
 And wite thou wel withouté were,
 That thee shal [seme] somtyme that nyght
 That thou hast hir, that is so bright, 2570
 Naked bitwene thyne armés there,
 All sothfastnesse as though it were.
 Thou shalt make castels thanne in Spayne
 And dreme of joye, all but in vayne,
 And thee deliten of right nought,

2530. Fr. 'Parole te faudra.'

2551. *bargeyn*, strife; Kaluza changes to *batell*.

2564. Fr. 'Com fait homs qui a mal a dens.'

While thou so slomrest in that thought,
That is so swete and delitable ;
The which in soth[ē] nys but fable,
For it ne shall no whilē laste.
Thanne shalt thou sighe and wepē faste
And say, "Dere god, what thing is
this? 2581

My dreame is turned all amys,
Which was full swete and apparent ;
But now I wake, it is al shent !
How yede this mery thought away !
Twēty tymes upon a day
I wolde this thought wolde come ageyne,
For it aleggith well my peyne ;
It makith me full of joyfull thought.

It sleth me that it lastith noght 2590
A lord, why nyl ye me socoure
Fro joye ? I trowe that I langoure ;
The deth I wolde me shuldē sloo
While I lye in hir armēs twoo.
Myne harme is harde, withouten wene,
My gret unease full ofte I meene.
But woldē love do so I myght
Have fully joye of hir so bright,
My peyne were quytte me rychely.
Allas, to grete a thing aske I ! 2600
Hit is but foly and wrong wenyng
To aske so outrageous a thyng ;
And who so askith folily,
He mote be warned hastily.

And I ne wote what I may say,
I am so fer out of the way.
For I wolde have full gret likyng
And full gret joye of lassē thing ;
For wolde she of hir gentylnesse
Withoutē more me oony kyssē, 2610
It were to me a grete guerdoun,
Relees of all my passioun.
But it is harde to come therto,
All is but folye that I do ;
So high I have myne hertē sette
Whēre I may no comfort gette ;
I not whēre I seye well or nought,
But this I wote wel in my thought,
That it were better of hir alloone,
Fōrto stynte my woo and moone, 2620

2585. *How*, MSS. *Now*.

2592. *Fro joye*, MSS. *The joye*, which Skeat retains, construing as object of *langour*; but 'langour' is not used in this sense

2617. MSS. *wote not*.

A loke on me I-caste goodly,
Than forto have al utterly
Of an other all hoolē the pley.
A lord, whēre I shall byde the day
That evere she shall my lady be ?
He is full cured that may hir sec.
A god, whanne shal the dawning springe ?
To lye thus is an angry thyng ;
I have no joye thus heere to lye
Whanne that my love is not me bye. 2630
A mān to lye hath gret disese,
Which may not slepe ne reste in ese.
I wolde it dawed and were now day,
And that the nyght were went away ;
For were it day I wolde uprise.
A slowē sonne, shewe thine enprise !
Spede thee to sprede thy beemys bright,
And chace the derknesse of the nyght,
To putte away the stoundēs stronge,
Whiche in me lasten all to longe !" 2640
The nyght shalt thou contenē soo
Withoutē rest, in peyne and woo.
If evere thou knewe of love distresse,
Thou shalt mowe lerne in that sicknesse,
And thus enduryng shalt thou lye,
And ryse on morwē up erly
Out of thy bedde, and harneys thee,
Er evere dawning thou maist see.
All pryvyly thanne shall thou goon,
What wedder it be, thi silf alloon, 2650
For reyne or hayle, for snowe, for slete,
Thider she dwellich that is so swete.
The which may fall'a-slepē be,
And thenkith but lytel upon thee.
Thanne shalt thou goon ful foule a-feerd
Loke if the gatē be unspered,
And waite without in woo and peyne,
Full yvel acoole, in wynde and reyne.
Thanne shal thou go the dore bifore,
If thou maist fyndē ony score, 2660
Or hoolē, or reef what evere it were.
Thanne shalt thou stoupe, and lay to ere,

2621. MSS. *on hir I-caste*. Skeat proposed the reading in the text : ? read *of hir*.

2624. *where*, whether ; introducing a direct question.

2628. *lye*, MSS. *liggen*, but cp. rhymes in vv. 2629, 2630 ; 2645, 2646.

2631. *to lye*, i.e. in lying down.

2641. *contene*, continue ; but Fr. 'te contendras' may have been rendered *contende*.

2650. *weder*, MSS. *whider*, Skeat's correction

If they withynne a-slepè be—
 I mene all save the lady free.
 Whom wakyng if thou maist asprie,
 Go putte thi-silf in jupartie,
 To askè grace, and thee bimene,
 That she may wite withoutè wene
 That thou [a-]nyght no rest hast hadde,
 So sore for hir thou were bystadde ; 2670
 Wommen wel ought pitè to take
 Of hem that sorwen for her sake.
 And loke, for love of that relyke,
 That thou thenke noon other lyke ;
 For whanne thou hast so gret annoy,
 Shall kysse thee er thou go away,
 And holde that in full gret deynce.
 And for that noman shal thee see
 Bifore the hous, ne in the way,
 Loke thou be goone ageyn er day. 2680

Such comyng and such goyng,
 Such hevynesse and such wakyng
 Makith lovers, withouten wene,
 Under her clothès pale and lene.
 For love leveth colour ne cleernesse,
 Who loveth trewe hath no fatnesse ;
 Thou shalt wel by thy-silf [y-]see
 That thou must nedis assaied be ;
 For men that shape hem other weye
 Falsly her ladyes to bitraye, 2690
 It is no wonder though they be fatt,
 With falsè othes her loves they gatt.
 For oft I see suche losengours
 Fatter than abbatis or priours.
 Yt with o thing I thee charge,
 That is to seye that thou be large
 Unto the mayde that hir doith serve,
 So best hir thanke thou shalt deserve.
 Yève hir yiftes, and gete hir grace,
 For so thou may thank purchace, 2700
 That she thee worthy holde and free,
 Thi lady, and all that may thee see.
 Also hir servauntes worshiþe ay,
 And please as mych as thou may ;
 Grete good through hem may come to thee

2669. *a-nyght*, MSS. *nyght*.

2673. 'Por l'amor du haut seintueire'; cp. the similar use of *relyk* in v. 2907.

2676. The Fr. directs the lover to kiss the door before leaving; so Kaluza reads *whan* for *whan* in verse above, and suggests *Thou kisse the dore er thou go away* for v. 2676.

2704. Read *mychel*, or insert *ever* before *may*.

Bi-cause with hir they ben pryve ;
 They shal hir telle hoe they thee fande
 Curteis, and wys, and well doande,
 And she shall preisë well the mare.
 Loke oute of londre thou be not fare, 2710
 And if such cause thou have that thee
 Bihoveth to gone out of contree,
 Leve hoole thin hertè in hostage,
 Till thou ageyn make thi passage.
 Thenke longe to see the swetè thyng,
 That hath thine herte in hir keepyng.
 Now have I tolde thee in what wise
 A lover shall do me servise ;
 Dó it thanne if thou wolt have
 The meedè that thou afir crave. 2720
 Whanne Love all this hadde boden me,
 I seide hym, 'Sire, how may it be
 That lovers may in such manere
 Endure the peyne ye have seid heere ?
 I merveyle me wonder faste
 How ony man may lyve or laste
 In such peyne and [in] such brennyng ;
 In sorwe and thought, and such sighyng,
 Aye unclesed woo to make,
 Whether so it be they slepe or wake, 2730
 In such annoy contynuely,
 As helpe me god, this merveile I
 How man, but he were maad of stele,
 Myght lyve a monthe such peynes to fele.'

The God of Love thanne seid me,
 'Freend, by the feith I owe to thee,
 May no man have good but he it bye ;
 A man loveth more tendirly
 The thyng that he hath bought most
 dere.

For wite thou well, withouten were, 2740
 In thanke that thyng is taken more
 For which a man hath suffred sore.
 Certis no wo ne may atteyne
 Unto the sore of lovès peyne ;
 Noon yvel therto ne may amounte,
 Nomorè than a man [may] counte
 The dropses that of the water be.
 For drye as well the greetè see
 Thou myghtist, as the harmès telle
 Of hem that with lovè dwelle 2750
 In servysè ; for peyne hem sleeth,
 And yet ech man wolde fle the deeth.

2709. Perhaps insert *there* before *well*.

2752. *yet*, 'toutes voies,' MSS. *that*.

And trowe thei shulde nevere escape,
 Nerè that hope couthe hem make
 Glád, as man in prisoun sett,
 And may not geten forto ete
 But barly breed and watir pure,
 And lyeth in vermyn and in ordure ;
 With all this yitt can he lyve,
 Good hope such comfort hath hym yive,
 Which maketh wene that he shall be 2761
 Delyvered and come to liberte.
 If fortune is [his] full trust,
 Thóugh he lye in strawe or dust ;
 In hoope is all his susteynyng.
 And so for lovers in her wenyng,
 Whiche Love hath shite in his prisoun,
 Good hope is her salvacioun.
 Good hope how sorè that they smerte
 Yeveth hem bothè will and herte 2770
 To profre her body to martire ;
 For hope so sore doith hem desire
 To suffre ech harne that men devise
 For joye that aftirward shall aryse.
 Hope in desire hathe victorie,
 In hope of love is all the glorie,
 For hope is all that love may yive ;
 Nere hope ther shulde no lover lyve.
 Blessid be hope, which with desire
 Avaunceth lovers in such manere ! 2780
 Good hope is curteis forto please,
 To kepe lovers from all disese ;
 Hope kepith his bonde, and wole abide
 For ony perill that may betyde ;
 For hope to lovers, as most cheef,
 Doth hem endure all myscheef ;
 Hope is her helpe whanne myster is.
 And I shall yeve thee eke I-wys
 Three other thingis, that gret solas
 Doith to hem that be in my las. 2790
 The firste good that may be founde
 To hem that in my lace be bounde
 Is SWETÈ THOUGHT, forto recorde
 Thing wherwith thou canst accorde
 Best in thyne herte, where she be.

2753. *And trowe*, i.e. I trowe; cp. vv. 2756, 2758.

2775. *hathè*, MSS. *cacche*; 'Esperance par souffrir vaint'. Skeat amends to *cache*, taking *hope* as imperative.

2783. *bonde*, MSS. *londe*.

Iceste te garantira.
 Ne ja de toi ne partira.

Thenkyng in absence is good to thee.
 Whanne ony lover doth compleyne,
 And lyveth in distresse and in peyne,
 Thanne Swetè-Thought shal comeas blyve
 Away his angre forto dryve. 2800
 It makith lovèrs to have remembraunce,
 Of comfort and of high plesaunce,
 That hope hath hight hym forto wyne.
 For Thought anon thanne shall bygynne,
 As ferre, god wote, as he can fynde,
 To make a mirrour of his mynde ;
 Forto biholde he wole not lette.
 Ifir persone he shall afore hym sette,
 Ifir laughing eyen, persaunt and clere,
 Ifir shappe, hir fourme, hir goodly chere :
 Ifir mouth, that is so gracious, 2811
 So swete and eke so saverous ;
 Of all hir fetures he shall take heede,
 Ifis eyen with all hir lym's fede.
 Thus Swetè-Thenkyng shall aswage
 The peyne of lovers and her rage.
 Thi joye shall double withoute gesse
 Whanne thou thenkist on hir semlynesse,
 Or of hir laughing, or of hir chere
 That to thee made thi lady dere. 2820
 This comfort wole I that thou take ;
 And if the next thou wolt forsake,
 Which is not lessè saverous,
 Thou shuldist ben to daungerous.

The secounde shal be SWETÈ-SPECHE,
 That hath to many oon be leche
 To bringe hem out of woo and were,
 And helpè many a bachilere,
 And many a lady sent socoure,
 That have lovèd paramour, 2830
 Through spekyng whannethey myght heere
 Of hir lovers, to hem so dere.
 To hem it voidith all her smerte,
 The which is closèd in her herte ;
 In herte it makith hem glad and light,
 Speche, whanne they mow have [no] sight.
 And therefore now it cometh to mynde
 In oldè dawès, as I fynde,
 That clerkis writen that hir knewe ;
 Ther was a lady, fresh of hewe, 2840
 Which of hir lovè made a songe,

2796. Kal. reads *Thought* for *Thenkyng*; but cp. v. 2815.

2808 *he shall*; cp. note to v. 2945.

2809. *eyen*, one syllable; cp. vv. 2913, 2814.

2824. MSS. *shuldest not*, 'seroies'.

On hym forto remembre amonge,
 In which she seyde : " Whanne that I here
 Speken of hym that is so dere,
 To me it voidith allé smerte.
 I-wys, he sittith so nere myne herte
 To speke of hym at eve or morwe
 It cureth me of all my sorwe.
 To me is noon so high plesaunce
 As of his persone dalyaunce." 2850
 She wist full well that Swete-Spekyng
 Comfortith in full myché thyng.
 Hir love she hadde full well assaid,
 Of him she was full well apaid ;
 To speke of hym hir joye was sett.
 Therfore I rede thee that thou gett
 A felowe that can well concele,
 And kepe thi counsell, and well hele,
 To whom go shewe hoolly thine herte,
 Bothe well and woo, joye and smerte ;
 To gete comfort to hym thou goo, 2861
 And pryvly bitwene yow twoo
 Yee shall speke of that goodly thyng,
 That hath thyne herte in hir kepyng.
 Of hir beaute, and hir semblaunce,
 And of hir goodly countenance ;
 Of all thi state, thou shalt hym seye,
 And aske hym counsell how thou may
 Do ony thyng that may hir plesse ;
 For it to thee shall do gret ese, 2870
 That he may wite thou trust hym soo,
 Bothe of thi wele and of thi woo.
 And if his herte to love be sett,
 His companye is myche the bett,
 For resoun wole he shewe to thee
 All uttirly his pryvyte,
 And what she is he loveth so.
 To thee pleynly he shall undo,
 Withouthé drede of ony shame,
 Bothe tell hir renoun and hir name. 2880
 Thanne shall he forther, ferre and nere,
 And namely to thi lady dere.
 In syker wise yee every other
 Shall helpen, as his owne brother,
 In trouthe withouthé doublenesse,
 And kepen cloos in sikernesse ;
 For it is noble thing in fay
 To have a man thou darst say
 Thy pryvé counsell every deell ; 2889

2881. Then shall he go further, etc.

2888. (?) Supply *that* before *thou*.

For that wole comforte thee right well,
 And thou shalt holde thee well apayed,
 Whanne such a freend thou hast assayed.

The thriddé good of gret comforte,
 That yeveth to lovers moste disporte,
 Comyth of sight and of biholding,
 That clepid is SWETÉ-LOKYNȝ.
 The which may [thee] noon esé do
 Whanne thou art fer thy lady fro.
 Wherefore thou prese alwey to be
 In placé where thou maist hir see. 2900
 For it is thyng most ameraus,
 Most delytable and saverous,
 Forto a-swage a mannés sorowe,
 To sene his lady by the morwe.
 For it is a full noble thing,
 Whánne thyne eyen have metyng
 With that relike precious
 Whereof they be so désirous.
 But al day after, soth it is,
 They have no drede to faren amysse ; 2910
 They dreden neither wynde ne reyne,
 Né noon other maner payne.
 For whanne thyne eyen were thus in blisse,
 Yit of hir curtesie, y-wysse,
 Allone they can not have her joye,
 But to the herte they [it] convoye ;
 Parte of her blisse to hym they sende,
 Of all this harme to make an ende.
 The eye is a good messangere,
 Which can to the herte in such manere
 Tidynȝis sendé, that hath sene 2921
 To voide hym of his peynés clene.
 Whereof the herte rejoiseth soo,
 That a gret partye of his woo
 Is voided, and putte away to flight,
 Right as the clerknesse of the nyght
 Is chased with clerenesse of the mone,
 Right so is al his woo full soone
 Devoided clene, whanne that the sight
 Biholden may that freshé wight 2930
 Thát the herte desireth soo,
 That al his derknesse is agoo.
 For thanne the herte is all at cse,
 Whanne the eyen sene that may hem plesse.

2902. MSS. *favorous*, 'savorous.'2917. *they*, MSS. *thou*.2920. The verse is made smoother by placing *can* after the first word of the next line.2925. *voided*, (?) *void*.2934. *the eyen*, 'li oel,' MSS. *they*.

Now have I declared thee all oute
 Of that thou were in drede and doute,
 For I have tolde thee feithfully
 What thee may curen utterly.
 And allè lovers that wole be
 Feithfull and full of stabilite, 2940
 Good hope alwey kepe bi thi side,
 And Swetè-Thought, make eke abide ;
 Swetè-Lokying and Swetè-Speche.
 Of all thyne harmes thei shall be leche :
 Of every thou shalt have gret plesaunce,
 If thou canst bidè in suffraunce,
 And servè wel withoute feyntise ;
 Thou shalt be quyte of thyne emprise
 With more guerdoun, if that thou lyve,
 But at this tyme this I thee yive. 2950
 The God of Love, whanne al the day
 Had taught me as ye have herd say,
 And enfourmed compendiously,
 He vanyshide away all sodeynly ;
 And I alloone lefte all soole,
 So full of compleynt and of doole,
 For I sawe no man there me by.
 My woundes me grevèd wondirly ;
 Me forto curen no thyng I knewe
 Sàve the bothon bright of hewe, 2960
 Wheron was sett hoolly my thought.
 Of other comfort knewe I nought,
 But it were thugh the God of Love.
 I knewe not elles to my bihove
 That myght me ease or comfort gete,
 But if he wolde hym entermete.
 The roser was withoute doute
 Clòsed with an hawe withoute,
 As ye toforn have herd me seyne.
 And fast I bisiede, and wolde fayne 2970
 Have passed the hay, if [that] I myght
 Have geten ynne by ony slight
 Unto the bothon so faire to see.
 But evere I draddè blamed to be,
 If men wolde have suspeccioun
 That I wolde of entencioun
 Have stole the roses that there were ;

2945. *Of every*, i.e. from each of them. Kaluza omits *gret*, but two unaccented syllables, one of which is *shall*, are not uncommon in the poem ; cp. vv. 2808, 2813.

2950. *at*, 'des ore,' MSS. *all*.

2953. *enfourmed*. Perhaps supply *me* before *enfourmed*.

2954. *awaye* does not seem to belong to the verse.

2968. *hawe*, MSS. *hegge* ; but cp. v. 3007.

Therfore to entre I was in fere.
 But at the last, as I bithought,
 Whether I shulde passe or nought, 2980
 I sawe come with a glad chere
 To me a lusty bachelere,
 Of good stature and of good hight ;
 And BIALACOIL forsothe he hight,
 Sónè he was to Curtesie.
 And he me grauntide full gladly
 The passage of the outter hay,
 And séidè 'Sir, how that yee may
 Pásse, if [that] youre willè be
 The freshe roser forto see, 2990
 And yee the swetè savour fele,
 Yón warrantè may [I] right wele.
 So thou thee kepè fro folyc,
 Shall no man do thee vylanye ;
 If I may helpè you in ought,
 I shall not feynè, dredeth nought,
 For I am bounde to youre servise,
 Fully devoide of feyntise.'
 Thanne unto Bialacoil saide I :
 'I thanke you, sir, full hertely 3000
 And youre biheestè take at gre,
 That ye so goodly profer me.
 To you it cometh of gret franchise
 That ye me profer youre servise.'
 Thanne afir, full delyverly,
 Thorough the breres anon wente I,
 Wherof encombred was the hay.
 I was wel plesed, the soth to say,
 To se the bothon faire and swote
 So freshe spronge out of the rote. 3010
 And Bialacoil me servèd well
 Whanne I so nygh me myghtè fele
 Of the bothon the swete odour
 And so lusty hewed of colour.
 But thanne a cherle (foule hym bityde !)
 Biside the roses gan hym hyde,
 To kepe the roses of that roser
 Of whom the namè was DAUNGER.
 This cherle was hid there in the greves,
 Kovered with gras and with leves, 3020
 To spie and take whom that he fonde
 Unto that Roser putte an honde.
 He was not soole, for ther was moo ;

2988. *how*, (?) *now* ; cp. v. 2585.

2992. MSS. *L'oure warrantè*, and omit *I* ; 'Ge vous i puis bien garantir.'

2998. Possibly *devoided* ; but cp. v. 3723.

3001. *biheest*, with inorganic *-e* as in Chaucer.

For with hym werē other twoo
 Of wikkid maneris and yvel fame.
 That oon was clepid by his name
 WYKKED-TONGE (god yeve hym sorwe !),
 For neither at evē ne at morwe
 He can of no man good [ne] speke ;
 On many a just man doth he wreke. 3030
 Ther was a womman eke that hight
 SHAME, that, who can reken right,
 Tréspace was hir fadir name,
 Hir moder Resoun ; and thus was Shame
 Brought of these ilkē twoo.
 And yitt hadde Trespasse never adoo
 With Resoun, ne never ley hir bye
 He was so hidous and so ugly,
 I menē this that Trespas hight ;
 But resoun conceived of a sight 3040
 Shame, of that I spake aforne.
 And whanne that Shame was thus [y-]
 borne,

It was ordeyned that CHASTITE
 Shulde of the Roser lady be,
 Which of the bothons more and lasse
 With sondre folk assailēd was,
 That she ne wistē what to doo.
 For Venus hir assailith soo,
 That nyght and day from hir she stale
 Bothons and roses over-all. 3050
 To Resoun thanne praieth Chastite,
 Whom Venus hath flemed over the sec,
 That she hir doughter wolde hir lene,
 To kepe the Roser fresh and grene.
 Anoon Resoun to Chastite
 Is fully assented that it be,
 And grauntide hir at hir request
 That Shame, by cause she is honest,
 Shall keper of the roser be.
 And thus to kepe it ther were three, 3060
 That noon shulde hardy be ne bolde,
 Wēre he yong or were he olde,
 Ageyn hir will away to bere
 Bothons ne roses that there were.
 I hadde wel spedde, hadde I not bene
 Awayted with these three and scene.
 For Bialacoil, that was so faire,
 So gracious and debonaire,
 Quytt hym to me full curteislye,

3038. 'Si hidous et si ley'; it would seem, therefore, as if second *so* belonged in text, and should not be omitted as Kaluza suggests.

And me to pleasē, bade that I 3070
 Shulde drawe me to the bothon nere ;
 Prese in to touchē the rosere
 Which bare the roses, he yaf me leve ;
 This graunte ne myght but lytel greve.
 And for he sawe it liked me,
 Ryght nygh the bothon pullede he
 A leef all grene and yaff me that ;
 The whiche full nygh the bothon sat,
 I made [me] of that leef full queynte.
 And whanne I felte I was aqueynte 3080
 With Bialacoil, and so pryve,
 I wende all at my will hadde be.
 Thanne waxe I hardy forto telle
 To Bialacoil how me bifelle
 Of love, that toke and wounded me ;
 And seidē : 'Sir, so mote I thee,
 I may no joye have in no wise
 Uppon no sidē, but it rise.
 For sithens, if I shall not feyne,
 In herte I have hadde so gret payne, 3090
 So gret annoy and such affray,
 That I ne wote what I shall say,
 I drede youre wrathē to disserve.
 Lever me were that knyvs kerve
 My body shulde in pecys small,
 Than any weyes it shuldē fall
 That ye wrathēd shulde ben with me.'
 'Sey boldēly this will,' quod he,
 'I nyl be wroth, if that I may, 3099
 For nought that thou shalt to me say.'
 Thanne seide I, 'Ser, not you displease
 To knowen of myn gret unnese,
 In which oonly love hath me brought.
 For peynēs gret, disese, and thought,
 Fro day to day he doth me drye—
 Supposeth not, sir, that I lye.
 In me fyve woundēs didē he make,
 The soore of whiche shall nevere slake ;
 But ye the Bothon grauntē me
 Which is moost passaunt of beaute, 3110
 My lyf, my deth, and my martire,
 And tresour, that I moost desire.'
 Thanne Bialacoil, affrayēd all,
 Seydē, 'Sir, it may not fall—
 That ye desire, it may not arise.
 What ! Wolde ye shende me in this wise ?

3096. *any weyes*, MSS. *in any wise* (Kaluza).
 3115. *arise*, cp. 3088 ; perhaps originally *arise*,
 with assonance.

A mochel foolè thanne I were,
 If I suffride you away to bere
 The fresh bothoun so faire of sight.
 For it were neither skile ne right, 3120
 Of the roser ye broke the rynde,
 Or take the rose afrom his kynde;
 Ye are not curteys to askè it.
 Late it still on the roser sitt,
 And growe til it amended be
 And parfytly come to beaute;
 I nolde not that it pullèd were
 Fró the roser that it bere,
 To me it is so leef and deere.' 3129
 With that sterte oute anon Daungere,
 Out of the place were he was hidde;
 His malice in his chere was kidde.
 Full grete he was and blak of hewe,
 Sturdy and hidous, who so hym knewe,
 Like sharp urchouns his here was growe;
 His eyes reed as the fyrè glowe,
 His nosè frounced, full kirkèd stode.
 He come criande as he were woode,
 And seide: 'Bialacoil, telle me why
 Thou bryngest hider so booldely 3140
 Hym that [is] so nygh the roser!
 Thou worchist in a wrong manner;
 He thenkith to dishonoure thee.
 Thou art wel worthy to have maugree,
 To late hym of the roser wite;
 Who serveth feloun is yvel quitte.
 Thou woldist have doon gret bounte,
 And he with shame wolde quytè thee.
 Fle hennés, Felowe! I rede thee goo,
 It wanteth litel I wole thee sloo; 3150
 For Bialacoil ne knewe thee thought,
 Whanne thee to serve he sette his thought;
 For thou wolt shame hym, if thou myght,
 Bóthe ageyns resoun and right.
 I wole no more in thee affye,
 That comest so slyghly for tescpye;
 Fór it preveth wonder well
 Thy sleight and tresoun every deell.'
 I durst no more there make abode

3118. The verse would be smoother without *away*; cp. note to v. 2954.

3136. Only in Thyune, which reads *reed sparklyngly*; 's'ot les iex rouges comme feus.'

3137. *kirked*, 'froncie,' translated in v. 7259 'frouncen.' Morris suggested *kroked*, which Skeat thinks likely.

3150. *I, Th. he; Gl. it; Fr. 'ge.*

Fór the cherl, he was so wode; 3160
 So gan he thretè and manace,
 And thurgh the haye he dide me chace.
 For feer of hym I tremblyde and quoke,
 So cherlishly his heed it shoke;
 And seide, if eft he myght me take
 I shulde not from his hondis scape.
 Thanne Bialacoil is fledde and mate,
 And I, all soole, disconsolate,
 Was left alone in peyne and thought.
 For shame to deth I was nygh brought.
 Thanne thought I on myn high foly, 3171
 How that my body utterly
 Was yeve to peyne and to martire;
 And therto hadde I so gret ire,
 That I ne durst the haye passe.
 There was noon hope, there was no grace,
 I trowe nevere man wiste of peyne,
 But he were laced in lovès cheyne;
 Ne no man [not], and sooth it is,
 But if he love, what anger is. 3180
 Love holdith his heest to me right wele,
 Whanne pèyne he seide I shuldè fele.
 Noon herte may thenke, ne tungè seyne
 A quarter of my woo and peyne;
 I myght not with the anger laste.
 Myn herte in poynnt was forto brast,
 Whanne I thought on the rose, that soo
 Was thurgh Daunger cast me froo.
 A longe while stode I in that state, 3189
 Til that me saugh so madde and mate
 The lady of the highe ward,
 Which from hir tour lokide thiderward.
 RESOUN men clepè that lady,
 Which from hir tour delyverly,
 Come down to me withoutè more.
 But she was neither yong ne hoore,
 Ne high ne lowe, ne faf ne lene,
 But best as it were in a mene.
 Hir eyen two were cleer and light
 As ony candell that brenneth bright; 3200
 And in hir heed she hadde a crowne.
 Hir semede wel an high persoun;
 For rounde environ hir crownet
 Was full of richè stonys fret.
 Hir goodly semblaunt by devys
 I trowe were maad in Paradys;
 For nature hadde nevere such a grace
 To forge a werk of such compace.

3175. MSS. *hayes*, 'la haie.'

For certeyn, but if the letter lyc,
 Gód hym-silf, that is so high, 3210
 Máde hir aftir his ymage,
 And yaff hir sith sich avauntage,
 That she hath myght and seignorie
 To kepé men from all folye.
 Who so wole trowe hir lore,
 Ne may offenden nevermore.

And while I stode thus derk and pale,
 Resoun bigan to me hir tale.
 She seide: 'Al hayle, my sweté freende!
 Foly and childhoode wole thee sheende,
 Which the have putt in gret affray; 3221
 Thou hast bought decre the tyme of May,
 That made thyn herte mery to be.
 In yvell tyme thou wentist to see
 The gardyne, wherof Idilnesse
 Bire the keye and was maistresse,
 Whánne thou yedest in the daunce
 With hir, and haddest aqueyntaunce.
 Hir aqueyntaunce is perilous,
 First softé and aftir noious; 3230
 She hath [thee] trashed withouté wene.
 The God of Love hadde the not sene,
 Ne hadde Idilnessé thee conveyed
 In the verger, where Myrthe hym played.
 If folý have supprisd thee,
 Do so that it recovered be,
 And be wel ware to take nomore,
 Counsel that greveth aftir sore.
 He is wise that wole hym-silf chastise;
 And though a yong man in ony wise
 Trespace amonge and do folý, 3241
 Late hym not tarye, but hastily
 Late hym amende what so be mys.
 And eke I counseile thee I-wys
 The God of Love hoolly foryeté,
 That hath thee in sich peyné sette,
 And thee in herte tourmented soo.
 I can not sene how thou maist goo
 Other weyés to garisoun;
 For Daunger that is so feloun 3250
 Felly purposith thee to werreye,
 Which is ful cruel, the soth to seye.

And yitt of Daunger cometh no blame
 In réwardé of my doughter Shame,
 Which hath the roses in her wardé,
 As she that may be no musarde.

3228. MSS. *hadde*.

3240. MSS. *in ony wise*; cp. note to v. 3096.

And WIKKED-TUNGE is with these two,
 That suffriþ no man thider goo.
 For er a thing be, do he shall,
 Where that he cometh over-all, 3260
 In fourty places, if it be sought,
 Seyethyng that never was don ne wrought;
 So moche tresoun is in his male,
 Of falsnesse forto seyne a tale.
 Thou delest with angry folk y-wis;
 Whérfore to thee bettir is
 Fróm these folk away to fare,
 For they wole make thee lyve in care.
 This is the yvell that love they calle,
 Wherynne ther is but folý alle; 3270
 For love is folý everydell.
 Who loveth in no wise may do well,
 Ne sette his thought on no good werk.
 His scole he lesith, if he be clerk;
 Of other craft eke if he be,
 He shal not thyve therynne, for he
 In love shal have more passioun
 Than moncké, hermyte, or chanoun.
 The peyne is hard out of mesure,
 The joye may eke no while endure; 3280
 And in the possessioun,
 Is mych tribulacioun.
 The joye it is so short lastyng,
 And but in happe is the getyng.
 For I see there many in travaill
 That atté lasté foulé fayle.
 I was no thyng thi counseler
 Whanne thou were maad the omager
 Of God of Love to hastily.
 Ther was no wisdom, but folý; 3290
 Thyne herte was joly but not sage,
 Whanne thou were brought in sich a rage,
 To yeldé thee so redily.

And to leve of his gret maistrie,
 I rede thee Love away to dryve,
 That makith thee recche not of thi lyve.
 The folý more fro day to day
 Shal growe, but thou it putte away.
 Take with thy teeth the bridel faste 3299
 To daunte thyné herte, and eke thee caste,
 If that thou maist gete thee defence,
 Forto redresse thi first offence.
 Who so his herte alwey wole leve
 Shal fynde amonge that shal hym greve.'

Whanne I hir herd thus me chastise,

3274. MSS. *a clerk*; Fr. 's'il est clers.

I answerd in ful angry wise ;
 I prayd hir ceessen of hir speche,
 Outur to chastise me or teche,
 To biddē me my thought refreyne, 3309
 Which Love hath caught in his demeyne.
 'What ! Wene ye Lovē wole consente,
 That me assailith with bowē bente,
 To drawe myne herte out of his honde,
 Which is so qwikly in his bonde ?
 That ye counseyle may nevere be ;
 For whanne he firste arestide me,
 He took myne herte so hoolē hym tille,
 That it is no thyng at my wille.
 He taught it so hym forto obey,
 That he it sparrde with a key. 3320
 I pray yow late me be all stille,
 For ye may well, if that ye wille,
 Your wordis waste in idilnesse.
 For utterly, withouten gesse,
 All that ye seyn is but in veyne.
 Me were lever dye in the peyne,
 Than Lovē to-me-ward shulde arette
 Falsheed, or tresoun on me sette.
 I wole me getē prys or blame
 And Lovē trewe to save my name ; 3330
 Who that me chastith I hym hate.
 With that word Resoun wente hir gate,
 Whanne she saugh for no sermonynge
 She myght me fro my foly brynge.
 Thanne dismaied I, lefte all sool,
 Forwery, forwanded, as a fool,
 For I ne knewe no chevisaunce.
 Thanne fell into my remembraunce
 How Lovē bade me to purveye
 A felowe, to whom I myght seye 3340
 My counsell and my pryvete,
 For that shulde moche availē me.
 With that bithought I me that I
 Hadde a felowe fastē by
 Trēwe and siker, curteys and hende ;
 And he was called by name a FRENDE,
 A trewer felowe was no wher noon.
 In haste to hym I wente anon,
 And to hym all my woo I tolde,
 Fro hym right nought I wold witholde.
 I tolde him all withoutē were, 3351
 And made my compleynt on Daungere,
 How forto see he was hidous,

3319. *taught*, MSS. *thought*.
 3331. MSS. *chastiseth*.

And to-me-ward contrarious ;
 The whichē, thurgh his cruelte
 Was in poynt to have meynēd me.
 With Bialacoil whanne he me sey
 Withynne the gardeyn walke and pley,
 Fro me he made hym forto go ;
 And I, bilefte aloone in woo, 3360
 I durst no lenger with hym speke,
 For Daunger seide he wolde be wreke,
 Whanne that he sawē how I wente
 The freshē bothon forto hente,
 If I were hardly to come neer
 Bitwene the hay and the Roser.

This frend, whanne he wiste of my
 thought,
 He discomforted me right nought,
 But seidē, 'Felowe, be not so madde,
 Ne so abaysshēd, nor bystadde ; 3370
 My sif I knowe full well Daungere,
 And how he is feers of his cheere
 At princē temps love to manace.
 Ful ofte I have ben in his caas ;
 A feloun firste though that he be,
 Aftir thou shalt hym souple se.
 Of longē passed I knewe hym well ;
 Ungoodly first though men hym feele,
 He wole mēke aftir in his beryng
 Been, for service and obeyssyng. 3380
 I shal thee telle what thou shalt doo :
 Mekely I rede thou go hym to,
 Of hertē pray hym specially
 Of thy trespass to have mercy,
 And hotē well, [hym] here to plesē,
 That thou shalt nevermore hym dis-
 plesē.

Who can best serve of flaterie,
 Shall please Daunger most uttirly.
 My frend hath seid to me so wel,
 That he me esid hath somdell, 3390
 And eke allegged of my torment.
 For thurgh hym had I hardēment
 Agayn to Daunger forto go,
 To preve if I myght mēke hym soo.
 To Daunger came I all ashamed,
 The which aforē me hadde y-blamed,
 Desiryng forto pesē my woo.

3379. *make*, MSS. *make*, 'amoloier.

3384. *Of herte*; cp. 3902.

3385. *well hym*, Skeat's emendation for *hym*
well of MSS. (?) *his ire to pesē* (*pesē* aphetic form
 of *appesē*); cp. v. 3397.

But over hegge durst I not goo,
 For he forbode me the passage.
 I fonde hym cruel in his rage 3400
 And in his honde a gret burdoun.
 To hym I knelide lowe a-doun,
 Ful meke of port and symple of chere,
 And seide, 'Sir, I am comen heere
 Only to aske of you mercy;
 It greveth me full gretly
 That evere my lyf I wratthéd you.
 But forto amenden I am come now,
 With all my myght, bothe loude and stille,
 To doon right at youre owné wille. 3410
 For Lové made me forto doo
 That I have trespassed hidirto,
 Fro whom I ne may withdrawe myne herte.
 Yit shall never for joy ne smerte,
 What so bifallé, good or ille,
 Offendé more ageyn youre wille;
 Lever I have endure disese,
 Than do that you shuldé displese.
 I you require and pray that ye
 Of me have mercy and pitce 3420
 To stynte your ire that greveth soo.
 That I wole swere for ever mo
 To be redressid at youre liking,
 If I trespasse in any thyng.
 Save that I pray thee graunté me
 A thyng that may not warnéd be:
 That I may lové all oonly,
 Noon other thyng of you aske I.
 I shall doon ellés well I-wys,
 If of youre grace ye graunte me this; 3430
 And ye may not letten me,
 For wel wot ye that love is free,
 And I shall loven sithen that I wille,
 Who evere like it, well or ille.
 And yit ne wold I for all Fraunce
 Do thyng to do you displeaunce.'

Thanne Daunger fille in his entent
 Forto foryeve his male talent;
 But all his wratthe yit atté laste

3398. *hegge*, probably mistake for *have*.

3406. *It greveth*, MSS. *That greveth*.

3407. *evere my lyf*, read (?) *ever in my lyf*.

3422. *That*, (?) *And*; Fr. 'et.'

3429. *elles*, Th. *all*. Bell: *I shal don at your wil reys*, which aptly gives sense of original.

3437. *fille in his entent*, (?) failed.

Moult trovai Dangier dur et lent,
 De pardonner son maltalent

Skeat interprets 'condescended,' but has *full* such a meaning?

He hath releseid, I preyde so faste. 3440
 Shortly he seide, 'Thy request
 Is not to mochel dishonest,
 Né I wole not werne it thee;
 For yit no thyng engreveth me.
 For though thou love thus evermore,
 To me is neither softe ne soore.
 Love where the list, what recchith me,
 So [thou] fer fro my roses be?
 Trust not on me for noon assay,
 If ony tyme thou passe the hay.' 3450
 Thus hath he graunted my praire.
 Thanne wente I forth withouten were
 Unto my frend, and tolde hym all,
 Which was right joyfull of my tale.
 He seide, 'Now goth wel thyn affaire,
 He shall to thee be debonaire;
 Though he afor was dispitous,
 He shall heere afir be gracious.
 If he were touchid on somme good veyne,
 He shuld yit rewen on thi peyne. 3460
 Suffre I rede, and no boost make,
 Till thou at good mes maist hym take.
 By sufferaunce and wordis softe
 A man may overcomé ofte
 Hym that afor he hadde in drede,
 In bookis sothly as I rede.'
 Thus hath my frend with gret comfort
 Avaunced me with high disport,
 Which wolde me good as mych as I.
 And thanne anon full sodeynly 3470
 I toke my leve, and streight I wente
 Unto the hay, for gret talent
 I hadde to sene the fresh bothoun
 Wherynne lay my salvacioun.
 And Daunger toke kepe, if that I
 Kepe hym covenant trewély.
 So sore I dradde his manasyng
 I dunst not breké his biddying,
 For lest that I were of hym shent
 I brake not his comaundément, 3480
 Fórtó purchase his good wille.
 It was [nat] forto come ther-tille,
 His mercy was to ferre bihynde;
 I wepte for I ne myght it fynde.
 I compleynéd and sighed sore,

3450. MSS. *I ony tyme to passe*, 'se tu james passes la haie.'

3482. *nat*, MSS. omit. Morris, etc. supply *hard*.

And langwisshéd evermore,
 For I durst not over goo
 Unto the rose I loved soo.
 Thurgh my demenyng outerly
 [Thanne he had knowlege certainly,] 3490
 That Love me ladde in sich a wise
 That in me ther was no feyntise,
 Falsheed, ne no trecherie.
 And yit he full of vylanye,
 Of disdeyne, and cruelte,
 Of me ne wolde have pite
 His cruel will forto refreyne,
 Though I wepe alwey and me compleyne.
 And while I was in this torment,
 Were come of gracé, by god sent, 3500
 Ffaunchise and with hir Pite.
 Fulfid the bothen of bounte,
 They go to Daunger anoon-right,
 To forther me with all her myght,
 And helpé in worde and in dede;
 For well they saugh that it was nede.
 First of hir gracé dame Fraunchise
 Hath taken [word] of this emprise;
 She seide, 'Daunger, gret wrong ye do
 To worche this man so mychc woo, 3510
 Or pynen hym so angerly;
 It is to you gret villanye.
 I can not see [ne] why ne how
 That he hath trespassed ageyn you,
 Save that he loveth; wherefore ye shulde
 The more in cherete of hym holde.
 The force of love makith hym do this;
 Who wolde hym blame, he dide amys.
 He leseth more than ye may do;
 His peyne is harde, ye may see lo, 3520
 And Love in no wise wolde consente
 That he have power to repente.
 For though that quyk ye wolde hym sloo,
 Fro love his herte may not goo.
 Now, sweté Sir, is it youre ese
 Hym forto angre or disese?
 Allas, what may it you avaunce

3489. MSS. *Thurgh out my demyng outerly That he had . . .* (i.e. omits) *Thanne love me ladde*, etc.; Fr. 'Tant fis qu'il a certainement Veü a mon contement Qu'Amors,' etc.

3522. *the bothen*, i.e. both, full of kindness, visit Daunger immediately. MSS. *the bothom*, which Skeat refers to the rosebud; Fr. 'car l'une a l'autre me vdroit.'

3505. (?) Omit in before *dede*.

3522. *he*, MSS. *ye*, a common scribal error.

To done to hym so gret grevaunce?
 What worship is it agayn hym take,
 Or on youre man a werré make, 3530
 Sith he so lowly every wise
 Is redy, as ye lust devise?
 If Love hath caught hym in his lace
 You for tobeye in every caas,
 And ben youre suget at youre will,
 Shuld ye therfore willen hym ill?
 Ye shulde hym sparé more all oute
 Than hym that is bothe proude and stoute.
 Curtesie wole that ye socour
 Hem that ben mcke undir youre cure. 3540
 His herte is hard that wole not meke,
 Whanne men of mekenesse hym biseke.'
 'That is certeyn,' seide Pite,
 'We se ofte that humilite
 Bothe ire and also felonye
 Venquyssheth, and also malencolye.
 To stondé forth in such duresse,
 This cruelte and wikkidnesse.
 Wherefore I pray you, Sir Daungere,
 Forto mayntene no lenger heere 3550
 Such cruel werre agayn youre man,
 As hoolly youre as ever he can;
 Nor that ye worchen no more woo
 On this caytif that langwisshith soo,
 Which wole no more to you trespassse,
 But putte hym hoolly in youre grace.
 His offense ne was but lite;
 The god of Love it was to wite,
 That he youre thrall so gretly is;
 And if ye harme hym, ye done amys. 3560
 For he hath hadde full hard penaunce,
 Sith that ye refte hym thaquelyntaunce
 Of Bialacoil, his mosté joye,
 Which alle hise peyn's myght acoye.
 He was biforn anyed sore,
 But thanne ye doubled hem well more.
 For he of blis hath ben full bare,
 Sith Bialacoil was fro hym fare.
 Love hath to hym do gret distresse,
 He hath no nede of more duresse; 3570
 Voideth from hym youre ire, I rede,
 Ye may not wymen in this dede.
 Makith Bialacoil repeire ageyn,

3546. *Venquyssheth*, two syllables; cp. 3554.

3548. *This*, *This is*.

3554. *On*, MSS. *Upon*.

3566. *hem*, MSS. *hym*, 'ses amais.'

And haveth pite upon his peyne ;
 For Fraunchise wole and I, Pite,
 That merciful to hym ye be.
 And sith that she and I accorde
 Have upon hym misericorde,
 For I you pray and eke moneste
 Nought to refusen oure requeste. 3580
 For he is hard and fell of thought,
 That for us twoo wole do right nought.'

Daunger ne myght no more endure,
 He mekede hym unto mesure.
 'I wole in no wise,' seith Daungere,
 'Denye that ye have asked heere,
 It were to gret uncurtesie ;
 I wole he have the companye
 Of Bialacoil, as ye devise ;
 I wole hym lettè in no wise.' 3590
 To Bialacoil thanne wente in hys
 Fraunchise, and seide full curteislye :
 'Ye have to longè be deignous
 Unto this lover and daungerous,
 Fro him to withdrawe your presence,
 Whiche hath do to him great offence,
 That ye not wolde upon him se ;
 Wherefore a sorrowful man is he.
 Shape ye to paye him, and to please,
 Of my love if ye wol have ease ; 3600
 Fulfyl his wyl, sithe that ye knowe
 Daunger is daunted and brought lowe
 Through helpe of me and of Pyte ;
 You dare no more aferdè be.'

'I shal do right as ye wyl,'
 Saith Bialacoil, 'for it is skyl,
 Sithe Daunger wol that it so be.'

Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me
 Bialacoil at the begynnyng,
 Salued me in his commyng : 3610
 No straungenesse was in him sene,
 No more than he ne had wrathed bene.
 As fayre semblaunt than shewed he me,
 And goodly, as aforne dyd he.
 And by the honde withoutè doute,
 Within the haye right al aboute
 He ladde me with right good chere,
 Al envyron the vergere
 That Daunger hadde me chased fro.
 Nowe have I leave over al to go, 3620

Nowe am I raysed at my devyse
 Fro hellè unto paradysse.

Thus Bialacoil of gentylnesse,
 With al his payne and besynesse,
 Hath shewed me onely of grace
 The estres of the swotè place.

I sawe the Rose when I was nygh
 Was greater woxen and more high,
 Frésshe, roddy, and fayre of hewe,
 Of coloure veer yliche newe. 3630

And whan I hadde it longè sene,
 I sawe that through the leves grene
 The Rosè spredde to spaunysshinge,
 To sene it was a goodly thyng.

But it ne was so sprede on brede
 That men within myght knowe the sede ;
 For it covert was and close

Bothe with the leves and with the rose.
 The stalke was even and grene upright,
 It was theron a goodly syght, 3640

And wel the better, withoutè wene,
 For the seed was nat [y-]sene.

Ful fayre it spraddè (God it blesse),
 For suche another, as I gesse,

Aforne ne was, ne more vermayle.

I was abawèd for marveyle,
 For ever the fayrer that it was,
 The more I am bounde in Lovè laas.

Longe I abode there, sothe to saye,
 Tyl Bialacoil I ganne to praye, 3650

Whan that I sawe him, in no wyse
 To me warnen his servyce,
 That he me woldè graunt a thyng,
 Whiche to remembre is wel syttyng.

This is to sayne, that of his grace
 He wolde me yeve leysar and space,
 To me that was so desyrous
 To have a kyssyng precious
 Of the goodly fresshe Rose, 3660

That so swetely smelleth in my nosc.
 'For if it you displeasèd nought
 I woldè gladly, as I have sought,
 Have a cosse therof freely
 Of your yefte ; for certainly
 I wol none have, but by your leve,
 So lothe me were you for to greve.'

He saydè, 'Frende, so god me spede,

3596-3690. From Thynne ; two leaves of Glasgow MS. missing.

3604. *dare*, cp. note to v. 1089.

3622. Th. *hell*.

3656. (?) Omit *me* and read *wolde*.

3667. Th. *said*.

Of Chastite I have suche drede,
 Thou shuldest nat warnéd be for me ;
 But I dare nat for Chastyte. 3670
 Agayne her dare I nat mysdo,
 For alwaye byldeth she me so
 To yeve no lover leave to kysse.
 For who therto maye wynne y-wisse,
 He of the surplus of the praye
 May lyve in hoope to gette some daye.
 For who so kyssynge maye attayne
 Of loves payne hath, soth to sayne,
 The best and [the] most avenaunt,
 And ernest of the remenaunt. 3680

Of his answer I sighed sore ;
 I durst assaye him tho no more,
 I hadde suche diede to greve him aye.
 A man shulde nat to moche assaye
 To chafe hys frende out of measure,
 Nor putte his lyfe in aventure.
 For no man at the firste stroke
 Ne maye nat fellé downe an oke,
 Nor of the reysyns have the wyne,
 Tyl grapes be ripe, and wel afyne 3690
 Be sore empressid, I you ensure,
 And drawn out of the pressure.
 But I forpeynéd wonder stronge,
 Thlough that I aboode right longe
 Afir the kis in peyne and woo,
 Sith I to kis desiréd soo ;
 Till that, rewyng on my distresse,
 Thier come Venus the goddesse,
 Which ay werreyeth Chastite,
 Came of hir grace to socoure me, 3700
 Whos myght is knowé ferre and wide ;
 For she is modir of Cupide,
 The god of love, blynde as stoon,
 That helpith lovers many oon.
 This lady brought in hir right honde
 Of brennyng fyre a blasyng bronde,
 Wherof the flawme and hooté fire
 Hath many a lady in desire
 Of lové brought, and soré hette,
 And in hir servise her hertes sette. 3710
 This lady was of good entaile,
 Right wondirfull of apparayle ;

Bi hir atyre so bright and shene
 Men myght perceyvè well and sene
 She was not of religioun.
 Nor I nell maké menciou
 Nór of robe nor of tresour,
 Of broche nor of hir riche attour,
 Ne of hir girdill aboute hir side,
 For that I nyll not longe abide. 3720
 But knowith wel that certeynly
 She was araiéd richely ;
 Devoyde of pruyde certeyn she was.
 To Bialacoil she wente apas,
 And to hym, shortly in a clause,
 She seid, ' Sir, what is the cause
 Ye ben of port so daungerous
 Unto this lover and deynous,
 To graunte hym nothyng but a kisse.
 To werne it hym ye done amysse, 3730
 Sith well ye woté how that he
 Is loves servaunt, as ye may see,
 And hath beaute, wher-through is
 Worthy of love to have the blis.
 How he is semely, biholde and see
 How he is faire, how he is free,
 How he is swoote and debonaire,
 Of agé yonge, lusty and faire.
 Ther is no lady so hawteyne,
 Duchesse ne countesse, ne chasteleyne,
 That I nolde holde hir ungoodly 3740
 For to refuse hym outterly.
 His breth is also good and swete,
 And eke his lippis rody, and mete
 Oonly to pleyen and to kisse ;
 Graunte hym a kis of gentilnyssse.
 His teth arn also white and clene.
 Me thenkith [it] wrong, withouten wene,
 If ye now werne hym, trustith me,
 To gĩaunté that a kis have he. 3750
 The lasse to helpe hym that ye haste,
 The moré tymé shul ye waste.
 Whanne the flawme of the verry bronde,
 That Venus brought in hir right honde,
 Hadde Bialacoil with heté smete,
 Anoon he bade me withouten lette,
 Grauntede to me the Rosé kisse.
 Thanne of my peyne I gan to lyse,
 And to the Rose anoon wente I,
 And kisside it full feithfully. 3760

3674. Th. *wynnen*.3688. Th. *fel*.3690. Skeat omits *be*, but unnecessarily.3698. Skeat reads *to me* for *come*.3700. *Came*, p. part. ? If so, *Comu*.3710. *hertes*, MSS. *herte* is.3718. *nor*, MSS. *neither*.3751. *to helpe*, MSS. *ye helpe*.

Thar no man aske if I was blithe
 Whanne the savour soft and lythe
 Stroke to myn herte withoute more,
 And me alleghed of my sore,
 So was I full of joye and blisse.
 It is faire sich a flour to kisse ;
 It was so swoote and saverous.
 I myght not be so angwissous,
 That I [ne] mote glad and joly be,
 Whanne that I remembre me. 3770
 Yit ever among, sothly to seyne,
 I suffre noye and mochē payne.
 The see may never be so stille,
 That with a litel wynde it nylle
 Overwhelme and turne also,
 As it were woode in wawis goo.
 Afir the calme, the trouble soone
 Mote folowe, and chaunge as the moone.
 Right so farith Love, that selde in oon
 Holdith his anker : for right anoon, 3780
 Whanne they in ese wene beste to lyve,
 They ben with tempest all fordryve.
 Who serveth love can telle of woo ;
 The stoundemele joie mote overgoo ;
 Now he hurteth and now he cureth,
 For selde in oo poynt love endureth.

Now is it right me to procede
 How Shame gan medle, and takē hede,
 Thurgh whom fele angres I have hadde.
 And how the strongē wall was maad, 3790
 And the castell of brede and lengthe,
 That God of Love wanne with his
 strengthe.

All this in Romance will I sette,
 And for no thyng ne will I lette,
 So that it lykynge to hir be
 That is the flour of beaute.
 For she may best my labour quyte,
 That I for hir love shal endite.

Wikkid-Tunge, that the covyne
 Of every lover can devyne 3800
 Worste, and addith more somdell
 (For wikkid tunge seith never well),
 To-me-ward bane he right gret hate,
 Espiying me erly and late,

Till he hath sene the gretē chere
 Of Bialacoil and me I-feere.
 He myghtē not his tunge withstonde
 Worse to reportē than he fonde,
 He was so full of cursēd rage ;
 It satte hym well of his lynage, 3810
 For hym an Irish womman bare.
 His tunge was fylēd sharpe and square,
 Póign[i]aunt, and right kervyng,
 And wonder bitter in spekyng.
 For whanne that he me gan espie,
 He swoore, affermyng sikirlye,
 Bitwenē Bialacoil and me
 Was yvel aquayntaunce and pryve.
 He spake therof so folilye,
 That he awakide Ielousye, 3820
 Which all afrayed in his isyng,
 Whanne that he herd [him] janglyng,
 He ran anoon as he weie woode
 To Bialacoil there that he stode ;
 Which haddē lever in this caas
 Have ben at Reynes or Amyas.
 For foot-hoot in his felonye,
 To hym thus seidē Ielousie :
 ‘ Why hast thou ben so negligēt
 To kepen, whanne I was absēt, 3830
 This verger heere left in thi warde.
 To me thou haddist no rewarde,
 To truste, to thy confusioun,
 Hym thus, to whom suspeccioun
 I have right gret, for it is nede ;
 It is well shewēd by the dede.
 Grete faute in thee now have I founde ;
 By God, anoon thou shalt be bounde,
 And fastē loken in a tour,
 Withoutē refuyt or socour. 3840
 For Shame to longe hath be thee froo ;
 Over soone she was agoo.
 Whanne thou hast lost bothe drede and
 feere,
 It semede wel she was not heere.
 Shē was bisy in no wyse
 To kepē thee and [to] chastise,
 And forto helpen Chastite
 To kepe the roser, as thenkith me.
 For thanne this boy knave so booldely
 Ne shuldē not have be hardy, 3850

3773 ff. Cp. Boece, 253 ff.

3774. nylle, MSS. wille.

3775. Overwhelme, (?) Overwhelve.

3779. selde, MSS. yelde (through zelde).

3786. selde, MSS. elde.

3796. beaute, three syllables, as in v. 3733.

3805. grette chere, kindly welcome.
 3826. Reynes, Rennes in Brittany; Fr. ‘a
 Estampes.’ Amyas corresponds to Fr. ‘a Mians.’

[Ne] in this verger hadde such game,
 Which now me turneth to gret shame.³⁸⁶¹
 Bialacoil nyst what to sey;
 Full fayn he wolde have fled away,
 For feere han hiddé, nere that he
 All sodeynly toke hym with me.
 And whanne I saugh he haddé soo,
 This Ielousié, take us twoo,
 I was a-stoned, and knewe no rede,
 But fledde away for verrey drede.³⁸⁶⁰
 Thanne Shame cam forth full symplely.
 She wende have trespassed full gretly,
 Humble of hir port, and made it symple,
 Weryng a vayle in stede of wymple,
 As nonnys don in her abbey.
 By cause hir herte was in affray,
 She gan to speke withynne a throwe
 To Ielousie right wonder lowe.
 First of his gracé she bysoughte
 And seiddé, 'Sire, ne leveth noughte³⁸⁷⁰
 Wikkid-Tunge, that false espie,
 Which is so glad to feyne and lye.
 He hath you maad, thurgh flatteryng,
 On Bialacoil a fals lesyng;
 His falsnesse is not now a-newe,
 It is to long that he hym knewe;
 This is not the firsté day,
 For Wikkid-Tunge hath custome ay
 Yóngé folkis to bewreye,
 And falsé lesynges on hem lye.³⁸⁸⁰
 Yit nevertheles I sec amonge
 Thát the loigne it is so longe
 Of Bialacoil, hertis to lure
 In Loves servyse forto endure,
 Drawyng such folk hym too,
 That he hath no thyng with to doo.
 But in sothnesse I trowé nought
 That Bialacoil hadde ever in thought
 To do trespass or vylonye.
 But for his modir Curtesie³⁸⁹⁰
 Háth taught hym ever to be
 Good of aqueyntaunce and pryve.
 For he loveth noon hevynesse,
 But mirthe, and pley, and all gladnesse;
 He hateth all trechours,
 Sóleyn folk and envyou[r]s;

3861. MSS. *simply*.3880. MSS. *lye*.

3885. This verse, like 3895, has but three accented syllables.

Fór ye witen how that he
 Wole ever glad and joyfull be,
 Hónestly with folk to pleye.
 I have be negligent in good feye³⁹⁰⁰
 To chastise hym; therfore now I,
 Of herte I crye you heere mercy
 That I have been so recheles
 To tamen hym, withouten lees.
 Of my foly I me repente.
 Now wole I hoole setté myn entente
 To kepé, bothé low[d]e and stille,
 Bialacoil to do youre wille.
 'Sháme, shame,' seyde Ielousie,
 'To be bytrashed gret drede have I;³⁹¹⁰
 Léccherie hath clombe so hye,
 That almoost bleréd is myn ye:
 No wonder is if that drede have I;
 Over all regnyth Lecchery,
 Whós myght growith nyght and day
 Bóthe in cloistre and in abbey;
 Chástite is werried over all,
 Therfore I wole with siker wall
 Close bothé roses and roser.
 I have to longe in this maner³⁹²⁰
 Left hem unclosid wilfully;
 Wherefore I am right inwardly
 Sorrowfull, and repenté me.
 But now they shall no lenger be
 Unclosid, and yit I dredé sore
 I shall repenté ferthermore;
 Fór the game goth all amys,
 Coínsell I must newe y-wys.
 I have to longé trusted thee,
 But now it shal no lenger be;³⁹³⁰
 For he may best in every cost
 Disceyve that men tristen most.
 I see wel that I am nygh shent,
 But if I sette my full entent
 Rémedyé to purveye.
 Thérfore close I shall the weye,
 Fro hem that wole the Rose espie,
 And come to wayte me vilonye.
 Fór in good feith and in trouthe,
 I wole not letté for no slouthe,³⁹⁴⁰
 To lyve the more in sikirnesse,
 To make anoon a fort[e]resse,
 Tencluse the roses of good savour.

3942. *To*, MSS. *Do*.3943. *Tencluse* (i.e. to enclose), MSS. *Thanne cluse*, 'qui . . . clorra entor.'

In myddis shall I make a tour,
 To putte Bialacoil in prisoun;
 For evere I drede me of tresoun.
 I trowe I shal hym kepè soo
 That he shal have no myght to goo
 Aboute, to makè companye
 To hem that thanke of vylanye; 3950
 Ne to no such as hath ben heere
 Afor, and founde in hym good chere;
 Which han assailèd hym to shende,
 And with her trowandysse to blynde.
 A foole is eythè to bigyle;
 But, may I lyve a litel while,
 He shal forthenke his fair semblaunt.'

And with that word came DREDE:avaunt,
 Which was abashed and in gret fere.
 Whanne he wiste Ielousie was there, 3960
 He was for drede in sich affray,
 That not a word durst he say.
 But quakyng stode full still aloone,
 Til Ielousie his weye was gone,
 Save Shame, that him not forsoke.
 Bothe Drede and she ful sorè quoke,
 Than attè lastè Drede abreyde,
 And to his cosyn Shamè seide:
 'Shame,' he seide, 'in sothfastnesse,
 To me it is gret hevynesse 3970
 That the noyse so ferrè is go,
 And the sclandre of us twoo;
 But sithe that it is byfall,
 Wè may it not ageyn call
 Whanne onys sprongen is a fame.
 For many a yeer withouten blame
 Wè han ben, and many a day;
 For many an Aprill and many a May
 Wè han passèd not [a-]shamed,
 Till Ielousie hath us blamed 3980
 Of mystrust and suspicioun,
 Causeles, withoute enchesoun.
 Go we to Daunger hastily,
 And late us shewe hym openly
 That he hath not aright [y-]wrought,
 Whanne that he settè nought his thought
 To kepè better the purprise.
 In his doying he is not wise;
 Hé hath to us do gret wronge,
 That hath suffred now so longe 3990
 Bialacoil to have his wille,

3967. *Than*, MSS. *That*.
 3974. Skeat supplies *do* before *call*.

Al his lustès to fulfille.
 He must amende it utterly,
 Or ellys shall he vilaynesly
 Exiled be out of this londe;
 For he the werre may not withstonde
 Of Ielousie, nor the greef,
 Sith Bialacoil is at myscheef.
 To Daunger, Shame and Drede anoon
 The righte weye ben goon. 4000
 The cherle thei founden hem afor
 Liggyng undir an hawèthorn;
 Undir his heed no pilowe was,
 But in the stede a trusse of gras.
 He slombred, and a nappe he toke,
 Tyll Shamè pitously hym shoke,
 And grete manace on hym gan make.
 'Why slepest thou, whanne thou shulde
 wake?'

Quod Shame. 'Thou doist us vylanye;
 Who tristith thee, he doth folye, 4010
 To kepè roses or bothouns
 Whanne thei ben faire in her sesouns.
 Thou art woxe to familiere,
 Whère thou shulde be straunge of chere,
 Stoute of thi porte, redy to greve.
 Thou doist gret folye forto leve
 Bialacoil here inne to calle
 The yonder man, to shende us alle.
 Though that thou slepest, we may here
 Of Ielousie gret noysè heere. 4020
 Art thou now late? Rise up an high,
 And stoppe sone, and delyverly,
 All the gappis of the hay;
 Dó no favour, I thee pray.
 It fallith no thyng to thy name
 To make faire semblaunt, where thou
 maist blame.
 Yf Bialacoil be sweete and free,
 Doggèd and fell thou shuldist be,
 Froward and outrageous y-wis.
 A cherl chaungeth that curteis is. 4030
 This have I herd ofte in seiying,
 "That man may, for no daunting,
 Máke a sperhauke of a bosarde."
 Alle men wole holde thee for musarde

3994. *vilaynesly*, stress on second syllable as in v. 178 (*elys*, one syllable as usual).

3998. 'Selec l'acueilloit en haine'; possibly misread as 'Se belacueil l'ait en haine.'

4021. 'Esties vous ore couchies?'

4026. *where*, as extra syllable after cæsura.

That debonair have founden thee.
 It sittith thee nought curteis to be,
 To do men plesaunce or servise ;
 In thee it is recreaundise.
 Léte thi werkis fer and nere
 Be like thi name, which is Daungere.'

Thanne, all abawid in shewing, ⁴⁰⁴¹
 Anoon spake Drede right thus seiyng,
 And seide, 'Daungere, I dredè me
 Thát thou ne wolt bisy be
 To kepè that thou hast to kepe ;
 Whannethoushuldíst wakethou art aslepe.
 Thou shalt be grevèd certeynly,
 If the aspiè Ielousie,
 Or if he fyndè thee to blame.
 He hath to day assailèd Shame ⁴⁰⁵⁰
 And chased away, with gret manace,
 Bialacoil oute of this place,
 And swereth shortly that he shall
 Enclose hym in a sturdy wall ;
 And all is for thi wikkidnesse,
 For that thee failèth straungènesse.
 Thyne herte I trowe be failed all.
 Thou shalt repente in speciall,
 If Ielousiè the sooth knewe ;
 Thou shalt forthenke and sorè rewe.' ⁴⁰⁶⁰

With that the cherl hisclubbeganshake,
 Frounyng his cyen gan to make,
 And hidous chere ; as man in rage
 For ire he brente in his visage.
 Whanne that [he] herd hym blamèd soo,
 He seide, 'Oute of my witte I goo ;
 To be discomfyt I have gret wronge.
 Certis I have now lyved to longe,
 Sith I may not this rosèr kepe.
 All quykke I wolde be dolven deepe ⁴⁰⁷⁰
 If ony man shal more reipeire
 Into this gardync, for soule or faire.
 Myne herte for ire goth a-ferè
 That I lete ony entre heere.
 I have do folie, now I see ;
 But now it shall amended bee.
 Who settith foot heere ony more,
 Truly he shall repente it sore,
 For no man moo into this place
 Of me to entre shal have grace. ⁴⁰⁸⁰
 Lever I hadde with swerdis tweyne
 Thurghoute myne herte in every veyne
 Perced to be with many a wounde,

4069. *roses*, MSS. *closer*.

Thanne slouthè shulde in me be founde.
 From hennès forth, by nyght or day,
 I shall defende it, if I may,
 Withouten ony excepcioun
 Of ech maner condicioun.
 And if I it eny man graunte,
 I holdeth me for recreaunte.' ⁴⁰⁹⁰

Thanne Daunger on his feet gan stonde,
 And hente a burdoun in his honde.
 Wroth in his ire, ne lefte he nought
 But thurgh the verger he hath sought ;
 If he myght fyndè hole or trace,
 Where-thurgh that me mote forth by pace,
 Or ony gappe, he dide it close,
 That no man myghtè touche a rose.
 Of the roser all aboute

He shitteth every man withoute. ⁴¹⁰⁰
 Thus day by day Daunger is wers,
 More wonderfull, and more dyvers,
 And feller eke than evere he was.
 For hym full ofte I synge 'allas,'
 For I ne may nought, thurgh his ire,
 Recovere that I moost desire.
 Myne herte, alas, wole brest a-twoo,
 For Bialacoil I wratthèd soo ;
 For certeynly in every membre
 I quakè whanne I me remembie ⁴¹¹⁰
 Of the bothon which I wolde
 Full ofte a day sene and biholde.
 And whanne I thenke upon the kisse,
 And how mych joye and blisse
 I haddè thurgh the savour swete,
 For wante of it I grone and grete.
 Me thenkith I fele yit in my nose
 The sweté savour of the rose.
 And now I woot that I mote goo
 So fer the freshe flourès froo, ⁴¹²⁰
 To me full welcome were the deth.
 Absens therof alas me sleeth.
 For whilom with this Rose, kisse,
 I touched nosè, mouth, and face ;
 But now the deth I must abide.
 But love consente another tyde
 That onys I touchè may and kisse,
 I trowe my peyne shall never lisse.
 Theron is all my covetise,
 Which brent myn herte in many wise.
 Now shal repaire agayn sighinge, ⁴¹³¹
 Long wacche on nyghtis, and no slepinge,

4096. *me*, one.

Thought in wissching, torment and woo,
 With many a turnyng to and froo.
 That half my payne I can not telle,
 For I am fallen into helle
 From paradys, and wel the more
 My turment greveth more and more.
 Anoith now the bittirnesse,
 That I to forn have felt swetnesse. 4140
 And Wikkid-Tunge thurgh his falshede
 Causeth all my woo and drede.
 On me he leieth a pitous charge,
 Bi-cause his tungc was to large.

Now it is tyme shortly that I
 Telle you som-thing of Ielousie,
 That was in gret suspccioun.
 Aboute hym lefte he no masoun,
 That stoon coude leyç, ne querrou; 4150
 He hirede hem to make a tour.
 And first, the roses forto kepe,
 Aboute hem made he a dichc deepe,
 Right wondir large, and also broode.
 Upon the whichc also stode
 Of squarcd stoon a sturdy wall,
 Which on a cragge was founded all.
 And right grete thikkenesse eke it bare
 Abouten it was founded square,
 An hundred fademe on every side.
 It was alichc longe and wide; 4160
 Lest ony tyme it were assayled,
 Ful wel aboute it was batayled,
 And rounde enviroun eke were sette
 Ful many a riche and faire tourette.
 At every corner of this wall
 Was sette a tour full pryncipall,
 And everich hadle, withoute fable,
 A portc-colys defensable
 To kepe of enemyes, and to greve
 That there her forc woldc preve. 4170
 And eke amyddc this purprise
 Was maad a tour of gret maistrise;
 A fairer saugh no man with sight,
 Large, and wide, and of gret myght.
 They dreddc noon assaut
 Of gynnç, gunnc, nor skaffaut.

4152. Possibly *he* is to be omitted. For *diche* cp. 4205.

4160. *aliche*, MSS. *allliche*, (?) *allaliche*.

4166. *tour*, 'portaus'; (?) *port* or some such word.

4172. *maistrise*, Fr. 'maistrise,' does not seem to be an English word.

The temprure of the mortere
 Was maad of lycour wonder dere,
 Of quykkc lyme, persant and egre,
 The which was temprcd with vynegre.
 The stoon was hard of adcmant, 4181
 Whcrof they made the foundcmnt.
 The tour was rounde, maad in compas;
 In all this world no richer was,
 Ne better ordeigned therwith-all.
 Aboutc the tour was maad a wall,
 So that bitwixt that and the tour
 Rosers were sette of swete savour
 With many roses that thei bere.
 And eke withynne the castell were 4190
 Spryngoldes, gunnes, bows and archers,
 And eke aboven attc corners
 Men scyn over the wallc stonde
 Grete engynçs, who were nygh honde.
 And in the kernels heere and there
 Of Arblasters grete plente were;
 Noon armure myght her stroke withstonde,
 It were foly to prece to honde.
 Withoutc the diche were lystcs maade
 With wall bataylç large and braade, 4200
 For men and hors shulde not atteyne
 To neighe the dyche over the pleyne.
 Thus Ielousie hath enviroun
 Sctc aboutc his garnysoun,
 With wallcs rounde and dichc depe,
 Only the roser forto kepe.
 And Daunger bere erly and late
 The keycs of the utter gate,
 The whichc openeth toward the eest.
 And he hadde with hym attc leest 4210
 Thrifty servauntes, echon by name.
 That other gatc keptc Shame,
 Which openedc, as it was couth,
 Toward the partile of the south.
 Sergeauntes assigncd were hir too
 Ful many, hir willc forto doo.
 Thanne Dredc hadde in hir baillie
 The keypyng of the Conestablerye,
 Toward the north I undirstonde,
 That openyde upon the lystc honde. 4220
 The which for no thyng may be sure
 But if she do bisy cure.
 Erly on morowe and also late,
 Strongly to shette and barre the gate.
 Of every thing that she may see
 Drede is aferd, wher so she be;

For with a puff of litell wynde
 Drede is a-stonyed in hir mynde.
 Therefore for stelyng of the Rose
 I rede hir nought the yate uncloze ; 4230
 A foulis flight wole make hir flec,
 And eke a shadowe if she it see.

Thanne Wikked-Tunge, full of envye,
 With soudiours of Normandy,
 As he that causeth all the bate,
 Was keper of the fourthē gate.
 And also to the tother thre
 He wente full oftē forto see.
 Whanne his lotte was to wake anyght,
 His instrumentis wolde he dight 4240
 Fōrto blowe and makē sowne
 (Oftē thanne he hath enchesoun)
 And walken oft upon the wall,
 Corners and wikettis over all
 Full narwē serchen and espie.
 Though he nought fonde, yit wole he
 lye

Discordaunt ever fro armonye,
 And distonēd from melodie.
 Controve he wolde, and foulē fayle
 With hornēpipes of Cornēwaile ; 4250
 In floytēs made he discordaunce.
 And in his musyk with myschaunce,
 He woldē seyn with notēs newe
 Thāt he fonde no womman trewe,
 Ne that he saugh never in his lyf
 Unto hir husbonde a trewe wyf ;
 Ne noon so ful of honeste,
 That she nyl laughe and mery be
 Whanne that she hereth, or may espie,
 A man speken of lecherie. 4260
 Évériche of hem hath somme vice ;
 Oon is dishonest, another is nyce ;
 If oon be full of vylanye,
 Another hath a likerous ighe ;
 If oon be full of wantonnesse,
 Another is a chideresse.

Thus Wikked Tunge (god yeve hem
 shame)

4249. *fayle*, make mistakes; but it may be an error for *fall* (rhyming with Cornewall), in which case the meaning is to make mistakes in counterpoint.

4250. *with hornēpipes*, etc., 'à estives de Cornaille.'

4254 ff. This seems to be the part of the Romaunce that Chaucer refers to in *L. of G. W.* 431.

4264. *ighe*, a form of *ye*.

Can putt hem everychone in blame
 Without desert, and causēles.
 He lieth, though they ben gittles. 4270
 I have pite to sene the sorwe
 Thāt waketh bothe eve and morwe,
 To Innocentis doith such grevaunce.
 I pray god yeve hym evel chaunce,
 Thāt he ever so bisie is
 Of ony womman to seyn amys.
 Eke Ielousiē God confounde,
 Thāt hath maad a tour so rounde,
 And made aboute a garisoun
 To sette Bealacoil in prisoun, 4280
 The which is shette there in the tour
 Ful longe to holdē there sojour,
 There forto lyven in penaunce.
 And forto do hym more grevaunce
 Ther hath ordeynēd Ielousie
 An oldē vekkē forto espye
 The maner of his governaunce.
 The whichē devel in hir enfaunce
 Hadde lerned of lovēs arte,
 And of his pleyēs toke hir parte. 4290
 She was expert in his servise,
 She knewe eche wrenche and every
 gise
 Of love, and every wile ;
 It was [the] harder hir to gile.
 Of Bealacoil she toke ay hede,
 That ever he lyveth in woo and drede.
 He kepte hym koy and eye pryve,
 Lēst in hym she haddē see
 Ony foly countenaunce ;
 For she knewe all the oldē daunce. 4300
 And afir this, whanne Ielousie
 Hadde Bealacoil in his baillie,
 And shette hym up that was so fre ;
 For seure of hym he woldē be.
 He trusteth sore in his castell,
 The strongē werk hym liketh well.
 He draddē not that no glotouns
 Shulde stele his roses or bothouns.
 The roses weren assured all,
 Defenced with the strongē wall. 4310
 Now Ielousie full well may be
 Of drede devoide in liberte,

4272. MSS. *walketh*; cp. v. 2682 and note thereto.

4285. *Ther*, MSS. *Which*.

4291. *expert*, MSS. *except*, which even in sense of 'acceptable' is not very clear.

Whether that he slepe or wake,
For his roses may noon be take.

But I allas now morné shall
Bi-cause I was withoute the wall.
Full moché doole and moone I made.
Who hadde wist what woo I hadde,
I trowe he wolde have had pite.
Lóve to deere hadde soolde to me 4320
The good, that of his love hadde I.
I wente a bought it all queyntly,
But now, thurgh doublyng of my peyne,
I see he wolde it selle ageyne,
And me a newé bargeyn leere,
The which all-oute the more is deere ;
For the solace that I have lorn,
Thanne I hadde it never aforn.
Certayn I am ful like in deede 4329
To hym that caste in erthe his seede,
And hath joie of the newé spryng,
Whanne it greneth in the gynnyng,
And is also faire and fresh of flour,
Lusty to seen, swoote of odour.
But er he it in shevès shere,
May falle a weder that shal it dere,
And makén it to fade and falle,
The stalke, the greyne, and floures
alle,

That to the tyler is fordone
The hopé that he hadde to soone. 4340
I drede certeyn that so fare I ;
For hope and travaille sikerlye
Ben me byraft all with a storme ;
The floure nel seeden of my corne.
For Love hath so avauncéd me
Whanne I bigan my pryvite
To Bialacoil all forto telle,
Whom I ne fonde froward ne felle,
But toke a gree all hool my play.
But Love is of so hard assay, 4350
That all at oonys he revéd me,
Whanne I wente best aboven have be.
It is of love as of fortune,
That chaungeth ofte, and nyl contune ;

4313. We get the best rhythm by reading *wher* and stressing *for* in the next line. *roses* is often thus followed by an unaccented syllable ; cp. c.g. 4314.

4322. MSS. *I wente aboute*. The correction is Kaluza's (except that he reads *wende* for *wente*, cp. v. 4352), and is justified by the Fr. original.

4339. MSS. *tylvers*.

4352. MSS. *aboven to*.

Which whilom wole on folkes smyle,
And glowmbe on hem another while ;
Now freend, now foo, shaltow hir feele.
For [in] a twynklyng, turne hir wheele,
Shé can writhe hir heed away ;
This is the concours of hir pley. 4360
She canne arisé that doth morne,
And whirle adown, and over turne.
Who sittith hieghst, but as hir lust ?
A foole is he that wole hir trust.
For it is I that am come down
Thurgh change and revolucioun.
Sith Bealacoil mote for me twynne,
Shette in the prisoun yonde withynne,
His absence at myn herte I fele.
For all my joye and all myne hele 4370
Wás in hym and in the rose,
That but yon walle, which hym doth close,
Opene that I may hym see,
Love nyl not that I curéd be
Of the peynes that I endure,
Nor of my cruel aventure.
A, Bialacoil, myn owné deere,
Though thou be now a prisonere,
Kepe atté leste thyne herte to me,
And suffre not that it daunted be ; 4380
Ne late not Ielousie in his rage
Putten thine herte in no servage.
Al though he chastice thee withoute,
And make thy body unto hym loute,
Have herte as hard as dyamaunt,
Stédéfast, and nought pliaunt ;
In prisoun though thi body be,
At largé kepe thyne herté free.
A trewé herté wole not plie,
For no manace that it may drye. 4390
If Ielousië doth thee payne,
Quyte hym his whilé thus agayne
To venge thee atté leest in thought,
If other way thou mai[e]st nought ;
And in this wisé sotilly
Wórche and wynné the maistric.
But yit I am in gret affray
Lést thou do not as I say ;
I drede thou canst me gret maugre
That thou enprisoned art for me. 4400
But that [is] not for my trespas,

4355. MSS. *folk*.

4357. *shaltow*, MSS. *shall*.

4372. *walle*, MSS. *wole*.

For thurgh me never discovred was
 That thyng that oughte be secree.
 Wel more anoye is in me
 Than is in thee of this myschaunce,
 For I endure more harde penaunce
 Than ony [man] can seyn or thyнке ;
 That for the sorwe almost I synke.
 Whanne I remembre me of my woo,
 Full nygh out of my witt I goo. 4410
 Inward myn herte I feelé blede ;
 For comfortles the deth I drede.
 Owe I not wel to have distresse
 Whanne falsé thurgh hir wikkednesse
 And traitours, that arn envious,
 To noyen me be so curious ?
 A, Bialacoil, full wel I see
 That they hem shape to disceyve thee,
 To make thee buxom to her lawe,
 And with her cordé thee to drawe 4420
 Where so hem lust, right at her wille ;
 I drede they have thee brought thertille.
 Withouté comfort thought me sleeth,
 This game wole brynge me to my deeth :
 For if youre good[é] wille I leese,
 I mote be deed, I may not chese ;
 And if that thou foryeté me,
 Myne herte shal nevere in likyng be,
 Nor elles where fyndé solace,
 If I be putt out of youre grace, 4430
 As it shal never been, I hope.
 Thanne shulde I fallen in wanhope.
 Allas—in wanhope ? nay pardee,
 For I wole never dispeired be.
 If hope me failé, thanne am I
 Ungracious and unworthy.
 In hope I wole comforted be,
 For Love, whanne he bitaught hir me,
 Seidé that I hope, where so I goo,
 Shulde ay be reles to my woo. 4440
 But what and she my baalis beete,
 And be to me curteis and sweete ?
 Shé is in no thyng full certeyne.
 Lovers she putt in full gret payne,
 And makith hem with woo to deele ;
 Hir faire biheeste disceyveth feele.
 For she wole byhote sikirly,
 And failen afir outrely.
 A, that is a full noyous thyng !

4403. MSS. *I'it.*4441. *what and*, what though.

For many a lover in lovyng 4450
 Hangeth upon hir, and trusteth fast,
 Whiche leese her travel at the last.
 Of thyng to comen she woot right
 nought ;
 Therfore if it be wysely sought,
 Hir counseill folý is to take.
 For many tymes whanne she wole make
 A full good silogisme, I drede
 That afirward ther shal in deede
 Folwe an evell conclusioun.
 This putte me in confusioun ; 4460
 For many tymes I have it seen
 That many have bigyled been
 For trust that they have sette in hope,
 Which felle hem afirward a-slope.
 But nevertheles yit gladly she wolde
 That he, that wole hym with hir holde,
 Hadde allé tymes his purpos clere,
 Withoute deceyte or ony were ;
 That she desieth sikirly.
 Whanne I hir blamed, I dide folý. 4470
 But what awayleth hir good wille ?
 Whanne she ne may staunche my stounde
 ille,
 That helpith litel that she may doo,
 Outake biheest unto my woo.
 And heesté certeyn, in no wise
 Withouté yift is not to prise.
 Whanne heest and deede a-sundry varie,
 They doon a gret contrarie.
 Thus am I posséd up and down
 With dool, thought, and confusioun ; 4480
 Of my disese ther is no nouble.
 Daunger and Shamé me encumbre,
 Drede also, and Ielousie,
 And Wikked-Tunge full of envie,
 Of whiche the sharpe and cruel ire
 Full ofte me putte in gret martire.
 They han my joyé fully lette,
 Sith Bialacoil they have bishette
 Fro me in prisoun wikkidly,
 Whóm I love so entierly 4490
 Thát it wole my bané bee
 But I the sonner may hym see.
 And yit more over, wurst of all,

4457. *silogisme*, read 'silogim.'4467. *his*, MSS. *her*.4472. *stounde*, perhaps read *wounde*.4492. *The sonner may hym see*, for syntax,
cp. 4515.

Ther is sette to kepe (foule hir bifall !)
 A rympled vekke, ferre ronne in age,
 Frowning and yelowe in hir visage,
 Which in a-wayte lyth day and nyght,
 That noon of hym may have a sight.
 Now mote my sorwe enforced be ;
 Full soth it is that Love yaf me 4500
 Three wonder yiftes, of his grace,
 Whiche I have lorn now in this place,
 Sith they ne may, withoute drede,
 Helpen but lytel, who taketh heede.
 For here availeth no Swetë-Thought,
 And Sweetë-Speche helpith right nought ;
 The thridde was called Swetë-Lokyng,
 That now is lorn without lesyng.
 Yiftes were faire, but not forthy
 They helpè me but symply 4510
 But Bialacoil loosèd be,
 To gon at large and to be free.
 For hym my lyf lyth all in doute,
 But if he come the rather oute.
 Allas, I trowe it wole not bene !
 For how shult I evermore hym sene ?
 He may not oute, and that is wronge,
 By cause the tour is so stronge.
 How shulde he oute ? By whos prowesse,
 Oute of so stronge a forteresse ? 4520
 By me certeyn it nyl be doo ;
 God woot I have no witte therto.
 But wel I woot I was in rage,
 Whonne I to Lovè dide homage.
 Who was the cause, in sothfastnesse,
 But hir-silf Dame Idelnesse,
 Which me conceid, thurgh my praiere,
 To entre into that faire verger ?
 She was to blame me to leve,
 The which now doth me soore greve.
 A foolis word is nought to trowe, 4531
 Ne worth an appel forto love.
 Men shulde hym snybbè bittirly
 At pryme tēps of his foly.

4494. *Ther is*, one syllable.

4495. *hym*, MSS. *hem*.

4511. *But*, unless. (?) Add *all* after *Bialacoil*.

4527. *my*, MSS. *faire* from line below ; 'ma
 roiere.'

4532. *love*, MSS. *looe*, but *love*, 'to value,' is
 the regular word in this connection. Medial *v*
 and *w* were sometimes rhymed together in northern
 poems; cp. note to v. 104. The scribe of Gl.
 writes *v* sometimes as *v*; cp. *wode*, v. 4709, where
 MS. *wode*, Th. *woyde*.

I was a fool and she me leevèd,
 Thurgh whom I am right nought releevèd ;
 She accomlisshid all my wille,
 That now me greveth wondir ille.
 Resoun me seide what shulde falle.
 A fool my silf I may wel calle 4540
 That love asyde I hadde not leyde,
 And trowed that damè Resoun seide.
 Resoun hadde bothè skile and ryght,
 Whanne she me blamed with all hir
 myght

To medle of love that hath me shent ;
 But certeyn now I wole repente.

And shulde I repente ? Nay, parde,
 A fals traitour thanne shulde I be.
 The develes engynnes wolde me take,
 If I my lordè woldè forsake, 4550
 Or Bialacoil falsly bitraye.
 Shulde I at myschof hate hym ? Nay,
 Sith he now for his curtesie
 Is in prison of Ielousie.

Curtesie certeyn dide he me,
 So mych that may not yolden be,
 Whanne he the hay passen me lete
 To kisse the Rosè faire and swete ;
 Shulde I therfore cunne hym mawgre ?
 Nay, certeynly, it shal not be ; 4560
 For Love shall nevere, yif God wille,
 Here of me, thurgh word or wille,
 Offence or complaynt more or lesse,
 Neither of Hope nor Idilnesse.
 For certis it were wrong that I
 Hated hem for her curtesie.
 Ther is not ellys but suffre and thynke,
 And waken whanne I shuldè wynke ;
 Abide in hope til Love, thurgh chaunce,
 Sende me socour or allegeaunce, 4570
 Expectant ay till I may mete
 To geten mercy of that swete.

Whilom I denke how love to me
 Seide he woldè take att gree
 My servise, if unpacience
 Causèd me to done offence.

He seide, 'In thank I shal it take,
 And high maister eke thee make,
 If wikkednesse ne reve it thee ; 4579
 But, sone, I trowe that shal not be.'
 These were his wordis by and by :
 It semede he lovede me trewely.
 Now is ther not but serve hym wele,

If that I thenke his thanke to fele ;
 My good, myne harme lyth hool in me.
 In love may no défauté be,
 For trewe Love ne failide never man ;
 Sothly the faute mote nedys than,
 As god forbede, be founde in me.
 And how it cometh, I can not see ; 4590
 Now late it goon as it may goo,
 Whether Love wole socoure me or sloo ;
 He may do hool on me his wille ;
 I am so soré bounde hym tille,
 From his servise I may not fleen ;
 For lyf and deth, withouten wene,
 Is in his hande, I may not chese,
 He may me doo bothe wyne and leese.
 And sith so sore he doth me greve,
 Yit if my lust he wolde acheve 4600
 To Bialacoil goodly to be,
 I yeve no force what felle on me.
 For though I dye as I mote nede,
 I praye Love of his goodlyhede
 To Bialacoil do gentylnesse,
 For whom I lyve in such distresse,
 That I mote deyen for penaunce.
 But first withouté repentaunce,
 I wole me confesse in good entent,
 And make in haste my testament, 4610
 As lovers doon that feelen smerte.
 To Bialacoil leve I myne herte
 All hool withouté departyng,
 Or doublenesse of repentyng.

Thus as I madé my passage
 In compleynt, and in cruel rage,
 And I not where to fynde a leche
 • That couthe unto myne helpyng eche,
 Sodeynly agayn comen doun
 Out of hir tour I saugh Resoun, 4620
 Discrete, and wis, and full plesaunt,
 And of hir porte full avenaunt.
 The righte weye she tooke to me,
 Which stode in gret perplexite,
 That was posséd in every side,
 That I nyst where I myght abide ;
 Till she demurely sad of chere,
 Seide to me, as she come nere,
 ‘ Myne owné frend, art thou yit greved ?
 How is this quarell yit acheved 4630
 Of Lovés side ? Anoon me telle.
 Hast thou not yit of Love thi fille ?

4592. *Whether*, read *Wher*.

Art thou not wery of thy servise
 That the hath in siché wise ?
 What joye hast thou in thy lovyng ?
 Is it swete or bitter thyng ?
 Canst thou yit chesé, late me see,
 What best thi socour myght be ?
 Thou servest a full noble lorde,
 That maketh thee thrall for thi rewarde,
 Which ay renewth thi turment, 4641
 With folý so he hath thee blent.
 Thou fell in mychceef thilké day
 Whanne thou didist, the sothe to say,
 Óbeysaunce and eke homage.
 Thou wroughtest no-thing as the sage,
 Whanne thou bicam his liegé man ;
 Thou didist a gret folý than,
 Thou wistest not what fell therto,
 With what lord thou haddist to do ; 4650
 If thou haddist hym wel knowe,
 Thou haddist nought be brought so lowe.
 For if thou wistest what it were,
 Thou noldist serve hym half a yeer,
 Not a weke nor half a day,
 Ne yit an hour withoute delay,
 Ne never ha lovede paramours.
 His lordshipp is so full of shoures,
 Knowest hym ought ?

L'Amaunt. ‘Ve, Dame, parde.

Raisoun. ‘Nay, nay.’

L'Amaunt. ‘Yis, I.’

Raisoun. ‘Wherof? late se.’

L'Amaunt. ‘Of that he seide I shulde be
 Glád to have sich lord as he, 4662
 And maister of sich seignorie.’

Raisoun. ‘Knowist hym no more?’

L'Amaunt. ‘Nay, certis, I,
 Save that he yaf me rewles there,
 And wente his wey, I nysté where,
 And I aboode bounde in balaunce.’

Raisoun. ‘Lo, there a noble conisaunce !
 But I wille that thou knowe hym now,
 Gynnyng and eendé, sith that thou 4670
 Art so anguisshous and mate,
 Disfigured oute of a-state ;
 Ther may no wrecche have more of woo,
 Ne caytfe noon enduren soo.
 It were to every man sitting
 Of his lord have knowecheing ;
 For if thou knewe hym oute of doute,

4634. Insert some word like *harmd* after *hath*.

Lightly thou shulde escapen oute
Of the paisoun that marreth thee.'

L'Amant. 'Ye, Damé, sith my lord
is he, 4680

And I his man maad with myn honde,
I woldè right fayne undirstonde
To knowen of what kynde he be,
If ony wolde enformè me.'

Raisoun. 'I wolde,' seide Resoun,
'thee here

Sith thou to lerne hast sich desire,
And shewè thee withouten fable,
A thyng that is not demonstrable.
Thou shalt [wite] withouten science.
And knowe withouten experience, 4690
The thyng that may not knowen be,
Ne wist ne shewid in no degre.
Thou maist the sothe of it not witen,
Thóugh in thee it werè writen.
Thou shalt not knowe therof more,
While thou art reuled by his lore.
But unto hym that love wole flece
The knottè may unclosed bee,
Which hath to thee, as it is founde,
So long be knette and not unbounde.
Now sette wel thyn entencion, 4701
To here of love discrepcioun.

Love it is an hatefull pees,
A free acquitaunce withoute reeles,
A truthe frette full of falsheede;
A sikernes all sette in drede,
In hertis a dispeiryng hope,
And full of hope it is wanhope;
Wise woodnesse and wode resoun,
A swetè perell in to droune, 4710
An hevvy birthen lyght to bere;
A wikked wawe alwey to ware,
It is Karibdous perilous;
Disagreable and gracious;
It is discordaunce that can accorde,

4687. *withouten*, perhaps dissyllabic.

4693, 4694. These obscure lines not in Fr., perhaps we should connect v. 4693 with v. 4692 (reading *now witen for not witen*), and v. 4694 with v. 4695.

4705. MSS. *And thurgh the*. The correction is Tyrwhitt's.

4705. *frette full*; cp. *Leg. of G. W.* 1117.

4709. Cp. note to v. 4532.

4712. 'A dangerous sea always to be avoided, It is Charybdis perilous.' The MS. reading *away to were* (nothing in Fr. corresponding) does not make good sense.

And accordaunce to discorde;
It is kunnyng withoute science,
Wisdomè withoutè sapience,
Witte withoutè discrecioun,
Havoire withoute possessioun; 4720
It is sike hele and hool sekenesse,
A thrust drownèd in dronknesse;
An helthè full of maladié,
And charite full of envie;
An hunger full of habundaunce,
And a gredy suffisaunce;
Delite right ful of hevynesse,
Dreihed full of gladnesse;
Bitter swetnesse and swete errour,
Right evell savoured good savour; 4730
Syn[nè] that pardoun hath withynne,
And pardoun spotted oute with synne;
A peyne also it is joiouse,
And felonyè right pitous;
Also pley that selde is stable,
And stedefast [stat] right mevable.
A strengthe weykèd to stonde upright,
And feblenessè full of myght;
Witte unavised, sage folie,
And joie full of turmentrie; 4740
A laughter it is, weping ay,
Reste that traveyleth nyght and day;
Also a swetè helle it is,
And a soroufull paradys;
A plesaunt gayl and esy prisoun,
And, full of froste, [a] somer sesoun,
Prýme temps full of frostès white,
And May devoide of al delite;
With seer branches blossoms ungrene,
And newe fruyt fillid with wynter tene.
It is a slowe may not forbere 4751
Raggès ribandèd with gold to were;
For also well wole love be sette
Under raggès as riche rochette,
And eke as wel by amourettes
In mournyng blak, as bright burnettes.

4722. MSS. *A trust . . . and dronknesse*.

4723. MSS. *And helth*.

4725. MSS. *And anger*.

4728. *dreihed*, MSS. *dried*.

4732. *oute with*, MSS. *without*.

4751. C'est taigue qui riens refuse
Les porque, et les bariaus use.

The word *taigue* (moth) of the Fr. is probably a mistake for *caigne* (cp. Hatzfeld-Darmesteter s.v. *caigne*). At least that seems to be the word here translated *slowe*, 'a vagabond.'

For noon is of so mochel pris,
 Ne no man founden [is] so wys,
 Ne noon so high is of parage,
 Ne no man founde of witt so sage, 4760
 Ne no man so hardy, ne so wight,
 Ne no man of so mychel myght,
 Noon so fulfilléd of bounte,
 That he with love [ne] may daunted be.
 All the world holdith this wey,
 Lóve makith all to goon myswey,
 But it be they of yvel lyf
 Whom Genius cursith man and wyf,
 That wrongly werke ageyn nature.
 Noon such I love, ne have no cure 4770
 Of sich as lovés servauntes bene,
 And wole not by my counsel fleene.
 For I ne preisé that lovyng,
 Wherthugh men at the laste eendyng
 Shall calle hem wrecchis full of woo,
 Love greveth hem and shendith soo.
 But if thou wolt wel love eschewe
 Forto escape out of his inewe,
 And make al hool thi sorwe to slake,
 No bettir counsel maist thou take 4780
 Than thyнке to fleen wel I-wis.
 Maynought helpe elles; for wite thou this:
 It thou fle it, it shal flee thee;
 Folowe it, and folowen shal it thee.'

Whanne I hadde herde all Resoun
 seyne,
 Which haddé spilt hir speche in veyne,
 'Dáme,' seide I, 'I dar wel sey,
 Of this avaunt me wel I may,
 That from youre scole so devyaunt
 I am, that never the more avaunt 4790
 Right nought am I thurgh youre doctrine.
 I dulle under youre discipline,
 I wote no more than wist [I] ever;
 To me so contrarie and so fer
 Is every thing that ye me lere,
 And yit I can it all by *par cuer*,
 Myne herte foryetith therof right nought,
 It is so writen in my thought;
 And depé greven it is so tendir
 That all by heite I can it rendre, 4800
 And rede it over comunely;
 But to my-silf lewedist am I.
 But sith ye love discreven so,
 And lak and preise it bothé twoo,

4764. Cp. similar mistake in v. 3774.

Defyneth it into this letter
 That I may thenke on it the better;
 For I herde never diffyne it ere,
 And wilfully I wolde it lere.'

Raisoun. 'If love be serchéd wel and
 sought,

It is a sykenesse of the thought, 4810
 Annexed and knet bitwixé tweyne
 Which male and female with oo cheyne
 So frely byndith that they nyll twynne,
 Whether so therof they leese or wyne.
 Therooté springith thurgh hooté brennyng
 Into disordinat desiryng
 Fórtó kissen and enbrace,
 And at her lust them to solace;
 Of other thyng love recclith nought
 But setteth her herte and all her thought, 4821
 Móre for delectacioun
 Than ony prociacioun
 Of other fruyt by engendrurc;
 (Which love to god is not plesure),
 For of her body fruyt to gete
 They yeve no force, they are so sette
 Upon delite to pley in-feere.
 And somme have also this manere,
 To feynen hem for lové seke.
 Sich love I preise not at a leke, 4830
 For paramours they do but feyne,
 To lové truly they disdeyne;
 They falsen ladies traitoursly,
 And swerne hem othes utterly,
 With many a lesyng and many a fable,
 And all they synden deceyvable;
 And whanne they han her lust [y]geten,
 The hooté ernes they al foryeten.
 Wymmen the harme they bien full sore,
 But men this thenken evermore; 4840
 That lasse harme is, so mote I the,
 Deceyve them thim deceyved be;
 And namely where they ne may
 Fynde none other mené wey.
 For I wote wel, in sothfastnesse,
 What wight doth now his bisynesse
 With ony womman forto dele
 For ony lust that he may fele,
 But if it be for engendrurc,
 He doth trespasse, I you ensure. 4850

4807. MSS. *diffyned here.*

4814. *Whether for wher.*

4824. *pleasure*, MSS. *pleasyng.*

For he shulde setten all his wille
 To geten a likly thyng hym tille,
 And to sustenē, if he myght,
 And kepē forth, by kyndēs right,
 His ownē lyknesse and semblable.
 For because all is corumpable,
 And failē shulde successioun,
 Ne were ther generacioun
 Oure sectis strenē forto save, 4859
 Whanne fader or moder am in grave,
 Her children shulde, whanne they ben
 deede,

Full diligent ben in her steede
 To use that werke on such a wise,
 That oon may thurgh another rise.
 Therefore sette Kynde theynne delite ;
 For men theynne shulde hem delite,
 And of that deede be not erke,
 But oftē sithēs haunt that werke.
 For noon wolde drawe therof a draught,
 Ne were delite which hath hym kaught.
 Thus hath sotillē Dame Nature ; 4871
 For noon goth right, I thee ensure,
 Ne hath entent hool ne parfit,
 For her desir is for delyte ;
 The which for tenē crece, and eke
 The pley of love for-oftē seke,
 And thrall hem silf they be so nyce
 Unto the prince of every vyce ;
 For of ech synne it is the rote
 Unlefull lust, though it be sote, 4880
 And of all yvell the racyne,
 As Tullius can determyne
 (Which in his tymē was full sage,)
 In a boke he made OF AGE,
 Whēre that more he preyseth celde,
 Though he be croked and unweelde,
 And more of commendacioun
 Than youthe in his discripcioun,
 For youthē sette bothe man and wyf
 In all perell of soule and lyf, 4890
 And perell is, but men have gracc,
 The perell of yough[th] forto pace
 Withoute ony deth or distresse,
 It is so full of wyldēnesse.

4871. *Thus hath sotilled* (MSS. *This had sotilled*, etc.), 'soutiva,' i.e. thus hath Nature subtly reasoned.

4875. *for tene crece* (MSS. *fortened crece*); *crece*, i.e. increase.

4892. Skeat and Kaluza read *tyme* for *perell*.

So ofte it doth shame or damage
 Tō hym, or to his lynage.
 It ledith man now up, now down,
 In mochel dissolucioun,
 And makith hym love yvell companye,
 And lede his lyf disrewliye, 4900
 And halt hym payed with noon estate.
 Withynne hym-silf is such debate,
 He chaungith purpos and entente
 And yalte [him] into somme covente,
 To lyven afir her emprise,
 And lesith fredom and fraunchise,
 That nature in hym haddē sette.
 The which ageyne he may not gette,
 If he there make his mansioun,
 For to abide professioun. 4910
 Though for a tyme his herte absente,
 It may not fayle, he shal repente,
 And eke abidē thilkē day
 To leve his abite and gone his way ;
 And lesith his worship and his name,
 And dar not come ageyn for shame,
 But al his lyf he doth so morne,
 By cause he dar not hom retourne.
 Freedom of kynde so lost hath he,
 That never may recurdē he, 4920
 But that if God hym grauntē grace
 That he may, er he hennēs pace,
 Conteyne undir obedience
 Thurgh the vertu of pacience.
 For youthe sett man in all folye,
 In unthrift and [in] ribaudie,
 In lecherie and in outiage,
 So ofte it chaungith of corage.
 Youthe gynneth oftē sich bargeyne
 That may not cende withouten peyne.
 In gret perell is sett youthede, 4931
 Delite so doth his bridil leede.
 Delite thus hangith, drede thee nought,
 Bothe mannys body and his thought
 Oonly thurgh youth, [his] chamberere,
 That to done yvell is custommere,
 And of nought elles taketh hede
 But oonly folkēs forto lede
 Into disporte and wyldēnesse,
 So [she] is frowarde from sadnesse. 4940
 But Eeldē drawith hem therfro,

4933. MSS. *this for thus*, 'ainsinc.'

4933. *drede thee nought*, i.e. you may be sure.

4940. Omitted subject

Who wote it nought, he may wel goo
 And moo of hem that now am olde,
 That whilom youthhed hadde in holde,
 Which yit remembre of tendir age,
 How it hem brought in many a rage,
 And many a foly therynne wrought.
 But now that Eelde hath hem thourgh
 sought,

They repente hem of her folye,
 That youthe hem putte in jupardye, 4950
 In perell, and in mychē woo,
 And made hem ofte amys to do,
 And suen yvell companye,
 Riot and avouterie.

But Eelde can ageyn restreynen
 From sich foly, and refreyne
 And sette men by her ordinaunce
 In good reule and in governaunce.
 But yvell she spendith hir servise
 For no man wole hir love ne preise, 4960
 She is hated, this wote I welle,
 Hir acqueyntaunce wolde noman fele
 Ne han of Eldē companye,
 Men hate to be of hir alye;
 For noman wolde bicomē olde
 Ne dye, whanne he is yong and bolde.
 And Eelde mervellith right gretlye,
 Whanne thei remembre hem inwardly,
 Of many a perelous emprise, 4969
 Whiche that they wrought in sondry wise,
 How evere they myght, withoutē blame,
 Escape away withoutē shame.
 In youthē withoutē damage
 Or reproof of her lynage,

Losse of membre, shedyng of blode,
 Perell of deth, or losse of good.
 Woste thou nought where Youthe abit,
 That men so preisen in her witt?
 With Delite she halt sojour,
 For bothe they dwellen in oon tour. 4980
 As longe as Youthe is in sesoun
 They dwellen in oon mansioun.
 Delite of Youthe wole have servise
 To do what so he wole devise;
 And Youthe is redy evermore
 Forto obey for smerte of sore

4943. *moo*, 'demant,' either verb meaning *to ask* or mistake for some such word. Cp. v. 5290 and note.

4944. *youthhed*, MSS. *youthe*

4960. MSS. *neither*; cp. v. 5718.

Unto Delite, and hym to yive
 Hir servise while that she may lyve.
 Where Elde abit I wole thee telle
 Shortly, and no whilē dwelle, 4990
 For thidir byhoveth thee to goo.
 If deth in youthe [hath] thee not sloo,
 Of this journey thou maist not faile.
 With hir Labour and Travaile
 Lóggēd ben, with Sorwe and Woo
 That never out of hir court goo.
 Peyne and Distresse, Syknesse and Ire
 And Malencoly, that angry sire,
 Ben of hir paleys senatours; 4999
 Gionyng and Grucchyng hir herbejours
 The day and nyght hir to turment,
 With cruell deth they hir present;
 And tellen hir, erliche and late,
 That Deth stont armēd at hir gate.
 Thanne brynge they to her remembrance
 The foly dedis of hir infauce,
 Whiche causen hir to mourne in woo
 That Youthe hath hir bigilēd so,
 Which sodeynly away is hasted.
 She wepeth the tyme that she hath wasted,
 Compleynyng of the preterit 5011
 And the present, that nat abit,
 And of hir oldē vanite;
 That, but aforē hir she may see
 In the future somme socour,
 To leggen hir of hir dolour,
 To graunte hir tyme of répentance,
 For her synnes to do penance,
 And at the laste so hir governe
 To wyne the joy that is eterne, 5020
 Fro which go bakward Youthe her made
 In vanite to droune and wade,—
 For present tyme abidith nought,
 It is more swift than any thought,
 So litel while it doth endure
 That ther nys comptē ne mesure.
 But how that evere the gamē go
 Who list to have joie and mirth also
 Of lovē, be it he or she

5004. MSS. *stondith*.

5022. The conclusion seems to have been forgot by the translator; Fr.

'Et qu'ele a sa vie perdue
 Se du futur n'est secourue,' etc.

So supply after 5022:

At her lyf she hath forlorn.

5028. *have* (MSS. *love*), read *I have*.

High or lowé, who it be, 5030
 In fruyt they shuldé hem delyte ;
 Her part they may not ellés quyte,
 To save hem-silf in honeste.
 And yit full many one I se
 Of wymmen, sothly forto seyne,
 Thát desire and woldé fayne
 The pley of love, they be so wilde,
 And not coveite to go with childe.
 And if with child they be perchaunce,
 They wole it holde a gret myschaunce ;
 But what-som-ever woo they fele, 5041
 They wole not pleyné but concele,
 But if it be ony fool or nyce
 In whom that Shame hath no justice.
 For to delyte echone they drawe,
 That haunte this werke bothe high and
 lawe,

Sáve sich that arn worth right nought
 Thát for money wole be bought.
 Such love I preisé in no wise,
 Whanne it is given for coveitise. 5050
 I preise no womman though she be wood
 That yeveth hir-silf for ony good.
 Fór litel shulde a man telle,
 Of hir that wole hir body selle,
 Bé she maydé, be she wyf,
 That quyk wole selle hir, bi hir lif.
 How faire chere that evere she make
 He is a wrecche, I undirtake,
 That loved such one, for swete or soure,
 Though she hym calle hir paramoure,
 And laugheth on hym, and makith hym
 feeste ; 5061

Fór certainly no such beeste
 Tó be loved is not worthy,
 Or bere the name of druerie.
 Noon shulde hir please, but he were
 woode,

That wole dispoile hym of his goode.
 Yit nevertheles I wole not sey
 That she for solace and for pley
 Ne may a jewel or other thyng
 Táke of her lovés fre yevyng ; 5070
 But that she aske it in no wise,
 For drede of shame of coveitise.
 And she of hirs may hym certeyn
 Withouté sclandre yeven ageyn,

5051. MSS. *though so be wood*; (?) read *to be good*. 'Mes ja certes n'iert fame bone.'

And joyne her hertes to-gidre so
 In love, and take and yeve also.
 Trówe not that I wolde hem twynne
 Whanne in her love ther is no synne ;
 I wole that they to-gedre go,
 And don al that they han ado, 5080
 As curteis shulde and debonaire,
 And in her love beren hem faire,
 Withouté vice, bothe he and she,
 So that alwey in honeste
 Fro foly love they kepe hem clere,
 That brenneth hertis with his fere,
 And that her love in ony wise
 Bé devoide of coveitise.
 Góod love shulde engendrid be
 Of trewé herte, just and secre, 5090
 And not of such as sette her thought
 To have her lust, and ellis nought.
 So are they caught in lovés lace,
 Truly for bodily solace.

Fleshy delite is so present
 With thee, that sette all thyne entent,
 Withouté more (what shulde I glose ?)
 Fórto gete and have the Rose,
 Which makith [thee] so mate and woode,
 That thou desirest noon other goode. 5100
 But thou art not an inche the nerre,
 But evere abidist in sorwe and werre,
 As in thi facé it is sene ;
 It makith thee bothe pale and lene ;
 Thy myght, thi vertu goth away.
 A sory geste, in goodé fay,
 Thou herberest then in thyne inne,
 The God of Love whanne thou let inne.
 Wherfore I rede thou shette hym oute,
 Or he shall greve thee, oute of doute ;
 For to thi profit it wole turne, 5111
 If he nomore with thee sojourne.
 In gret myscheef and sorwe sonken
 Ben hertis that of love arn dronken,
 As thou peraunter knowen shall
 Whanne thou hast lost thi tyme all,
 And spent thy youth in ydilnesse
 In waste and wofull lustynesse.
 If thou maist lyve the tyme to se
 Of love forto delyvered be, 5120

5085. *they*, MSS. *to*.

5107. *then*, MS. *hem*; Th. omits.

5116. *thi tyme*, 'ton ten', MSS. *the tyme*.

5117. *thy youth*, 'ta jonesce', MSS. *by thought*.

Thy tyme thou shalt biwepè sore,
 The whichè never thou maist restore,
 For tymè lost, as men may see,
 For no thyng may recured be.
 And if thou scape yit attè laste
 Fro Lovè that hath thee so faste
 Knytt and bounden in his lace,
 Certeyn I holde it but a grace.
 For many oon, as it is seyne,
 Have lost and spent also in veyne 5130
 In his servise, withoute socour,
 Body and soule, good and tresour,
 Witte and strengthe and eke richesse,
 Of which they hadde never redresse.'

Thus taught and prechèd hath resoun,
 Bût Lovè spiltè hir sermoun,
 That was so ymped in my thought,
 That hir doctrine I sette at nought.
 And yitt ne seide she never a dele
 That I ne undirstode it welc, 5140
 Word by word the mater all;
 But unto love I was so thrall,
 Which callith over-all his pray,
 He chasith so my thought al day,
 And halt myne herte undir his sele,
 As trust and trew as ony stele.
 Sô that no devocioun
 Né hadde I in the sermoun
 Of dame Resoun, ne of hir rede.
 It toke no sojour in myne hede, 5150
 For all yede oute at [that] oon ere,
 That in that other she dide lere;
 Fully on me she lost hir lore.
 Hir speche me grevèd wondir sore.

Than unto hir for ire I seide,
 For anger as I dide abraide:
 'Dame, and is it youre wille algate
 That I not love, but that I hate
 Allè men, as ye me teche?
 For if I do afir youre speche, 5160
 Sith that ye seyne love is not good,
 Thanne must I nedis say with mood,
 If I it leve, in hatrede ay
 To lyven, and voidè love away
 From me, [and be] a synfull wrecche,

5144. *al day*, MSS. *ay*; cp. v. 5174.

5145. *halt*, MSS. *holdith*.

5162. *say*, an aphetic form of *assay*, to attempt.

5164. MSS. omit *to*.

5165. The bracketed words (Skate's readings) seem necessary to the sense.

Hated of all that [love that] tecche;
 I may not go noon other gate,
 For other must I love or hate.
 And if I hatè men of newe
 More than love, it wole me rewe, 5170
 As by youre preching semeth me,
 For Love no thing ne preisith thee.
 Ye yeve good counsel sikirly,
 That prechith me al day that I
 Shulde not lovès lore alowe,
 He were a foole wolde you not trowe.
 In speche also ye han me taught
 Another love that knowen is naught,
 Which I have herd you not repreve,
 To love ech other. By youre leve, 5180
 If ye wolde diffyne it me,
 I wolde gladly here to se,
 Attè the leest, if I may lere,
 Of sondry lovès the manere.'

Raisoun. 'Cértis freend a fool art thou
 Whan that thou no thyng wolt allowe,
 Thát I for thi profit say.
 Yit wole I sey thee more in fay,
 For I am redy at the leste
 To accomplisshè thi requeste. 5190
 But I not where it wole avayle,
 In veyn perauntre I shal travayle.
 Love ther is in sondry wise,
 As I shal thee heere devise.
 For somme love leful is and good;
 I mene not that which makith thee wood,
 And bringith thee in many a fitte
 And ravysshith fro thee al thi witte,
 It is so mervelouse and queynte;
 With such love be no more aqueynte.

Love of freendship also ther is, 5201
 Which makith no man done amys,
 Of willè knytt bitwixè two,
 That wole not breke for wele ne woo;
 Which long is likly to contune
 Whanne wille and goodis ben in comune;
 Grounded by goddis ordinaunce,
 Hoole withoutè discordaunce;
 With hem holdyng comune
 Of all her goode in charite; 5210
 That ther be noon excepcioun
 Thurgh chaungyng of entencioun;
 That ech helpe other at her neede,

5172. *preisith thee*, 'Tout me vaille Amors un denier.'

And wisely hele bothe word and dede ;
 Trewe of menyng, devoide of slouthē,
 For witt is nought withoutē trouthe,
 So that the ton dar all his thought,
 Seyn to his freend and sparē nought
 As to hym silf, withoute dredyng
 To be discovered by wreyng. 5220
 For glad is that conjunccioun
 Whanne ther is noon susspeciou,
 [Ne lak in hem] whom they wolde
 prove,

That trewe and parfit weren in love.
 For no man may be amyable,
 But if he be so ferme and stable
 That fortune chaunge hym not, ne blynde ;
 But that his freend all-vey hym fynde,
 Bothe pore and riche, in oon estate.
 For if his freend, thurgh ony gate, 5230
 Wole compleyne of his povertē,
 He shulde not hīde so long til he
 Of his helpyng hym requere ;
 For goode dedē done thurgh prairie
 Is sold and bought to deere, I-wys,
 To hert that of grete valour is.
 For hert fulfilled of gentilnesse
 Can yvel demenē his distresse,
 And man, that worthy is of name,
 To asken often hath gret shame. 5240
 A good man brenneth in his thought
 For shamē, whanne he axeth ought.
 He hath gret thought, and dredeth ay
 For his disese, whanne he shal pray
 His freend, lest that he warnēd be,
 Til that he preve his stabilte.
 But whanne that he hath founden oon,
 That trusty is and trewe as stone,
 And [hath] assaied hym at alle,
 And founde hym stedefast as a walle 5250
 And of his freendship be certeyne,
 He shal hym shewe botlie joye and
 peyne,

And all that [he] dar thynke or sey,
 Withoutē shame, as he wel may.
 For how shulde he a-shamēd be
 Of sich one as I toldē thee ?
 For whanne he woot his secre thought,

5223. *Tiex mors (mœurs) avoir doivent et soulent
 Qui parfaitement amer veulent.*

The bracketed words were supplied by Professor Skeat.

The thridde shal knowe therof right
 nought ;
 For tweyne of noumbre is bet than thre
 In every counsell and secre. 5260
 Repreve he dredeth never a deele
 Who that bisett his worldis wele.
 For every wise man, out of drede,
 Can kepe his tunge til he se nede ;
 And foolēs can not holde her tunge —
 “ A foolēs belle is soonē runge.”
 Yit shal a trewē freend do more,
 To helpe his felowe of his soie,
 And secoure hym, whanne he hath neede,
 In all that he may done in deede ; 5270
 And gladder [be] that he hym plesith,
 Than his felowe, that he esith.
 And if he do not his requeste,
 He shal as mochel hym moleste
 As his felow, for that he
 May not fulfille his volunte
 Fully, as he hath requered.
 If bothe the hertis Love hath fered,
 Joy and woo they shull depaite
 And take evenly ech his parte ; 5280
 Half his anoy he shal have ay,
 And comfort [him] what that he may ;
 And of his blisse parte shal he,
 If lovē wel departed be.

And whilom of this unyte
 Spake Tullius in a ditee,
 Man shuldē maken his requeste
 Unto his freend that is honeste,
 And he goodly shulde it fulfille,
 But if the more were out of skile ; 5290
 And other wise not graunte therto,
 Except oonly in causes twoo ;
 If men his freend to deth wolde drive,
 Late hym be bisy to save his lyve ;
 Also if men wolen hym assaile
 Of his wurship to make hym faile,
 And hyndren hym of his renoun ;

5274. *Hic.* Perhaps read *That* or *It*, as a reflexive verb *molest* is unusual.

5287. *comfort him* (MSS. omit *him*), ‘*le conforte.*’

5284. *wel* (MSS. *wolde*), ‘*a droit.*’

5287. *Man* (MSS. *And*) *shulde*, one should, ‘*devons.*’

5290. MSS. *But it. more* is either a subst. meaning *request*, or a similar mistake to that in v. 4943.

5292. *causes* (MSS. *cause*), *cases*.

Late hym, with full entencioun,
 His dever done in eche degre
 That his freend ne shaméd be, 5300
 In this two causes with his myght,
 Taking no kepe to skile nor right
 As ferre as love may hym excuse ;
 This ought no man to refuse.
 This love, that I have tolde to thee,
 Is no thing contrarie to me ;
 This wole I that thou folowe wele,
 And leve the tother everydele ;
 This love to vertu all entendith,
 The tothir foolés blent and shendith. 5310

Another love also there is,
 That is contrarie unto this ;
 Which desire is so constreyned
 That [it] is but willé feyned.
 Away fro trouthe it doth so varie,
 That to good love it is contrarie,
 For it maymeth in many wise
 Siké hertis with covetise.
 All in wynnyng and in profit
 Sich love settith his delite. 5320
 This love so hangeth in balaunce,
 That if it lese his hope perchaunce
 Of lucre that he is sett upon,
 It wole faile and quenche anoon.
 For no man may be amercous,
 Ne in his lyvyng vertuous,
 But he lovè more in moode
 Men for him-silf than for her goode.
 For love that profit doth abide
 Is fals, and bit not in no tyde 5330
 [This] lovè cometh of Dame Fortune,
 That litel whilè wole contune ;
 For it shal chaungen wonder soone,
 And take Eclips ; right as the moone
 Whanne he is from us lett
 Thurgh erthé, that bitwixe is sett
 The sonne and hir, as it may falle,
 Be it in partie or in all.
 The shadowe maketh her benmys merke,
 And hir hornes to shewe derke 5340
 That part where she hath lost hir lyght
 Of Phebus fully, and the sight ;
 Til, whanne the shadowe is overpaste,

She is enlumyned ageyn as faste
 Thurgh the brightnesse of the sonnè bemes,
 That yeveth to hir ageyne hir lemes.
 That love is right of sich nature,
 Now is faire, and now obscure,
 Now bright, now clipsi of manere,
 And whilom dymme, and whilom clere.
 As soone as poverté gynneth take, 5351
 With mantel and [with] wedis blake
 Hidith of love the light away,
 That into nyght it turneth day ;
 It may not see richessè shyne,
 Till the blaké shadowes fyne.
 For whanne richessè shyneth bright
 Love recovereth ageyn his light,
 And whanne it failith, he wole flit ;
 And as she groweth, so groweth it. 5360
 Of this love here what I sey :
 The richè men are lovéd ay,
 And namely tho that sparand bene,
 That wole not wasche her hertes clene
 Of the filthe, nor of the vice
 Of gredy brennyng avarice.
 The riche man full fonnéd is y-wys,
 That weneth that he loved is ;
 If that his herte it undirstode,
 It is not he, it is his goode ; 5370
 He may wel witen in his thought
 His good is loved and he right nought.
 For if he be a nygard eke,
 Men wole not sette by hym a leke,
 But haten hym, this is the sothe.
 Lo, what profit his catell doth ?
 Of every man that may hym see,
 It geteth hym nought but enmyte.
 But he amende hym of that vice,
 And knowe hym silf, he is not wys. 5380
 Certys he shulde ay freendly be,
 To gete him love also ben free,
 Or ellis he is not wise ne sage,
 Nomore than is a gote ramage.
 That he not loveth his dede proveth,
 Whan he his richesse so wel loveth
 That he wole hide it ay and spare,
 His poré freendis sene forfare
 To kepen alway his purpose,

5301. MSS. *caas*.5327. Perhaps insert *if* after *But*.5342. Such displacements as this of *and* were common in 15th century verse.5351. *take*, 'l'afuble.'5353. *Hidith*. Skeat reads *It hit*, and perhaps rightly.5379. *hym*, MSS. *hymself*.5389. *alway*, MSS. *ay* ; cp. v. 5144.

Til for drede his yen close, 5390
 And til a wikked deth hym take.
 Hym hadde lever a-sondre shake
 And late hise lymes a-sondre ryve,
 Than leve his richesse in his lyve;
 He thenkith parte it with no man.
 Certayn no love is in hym than;
 How shuldè love withynne hym be,
 Whanne in his herte is no pite?
 That he trespasseth wel I wat,
 For ech man knowith his estate. 5400
 For wel hym ought to be reproved
 That loveth nought, ne is not loved.
 But sen we am to fortune comen,
 And hath oure sermoun of hir nomen,
 A wondir will y telle thee now;e;
 Thou herdist never sich oon I trowe.
 I note where thou me leven shall,
 Though sothfastnesse it be at all.
 As it is writen and is soth,
 That unto men more profit doth 5410
 The froward fortune and contraire,
 Thán the swote and debonaire;
 And if thee thynke it is doutable
 It is thurgh argument provable;
 Fór the debonaire and softe
 Falsith and bigilith ofte.
 For lyche a moder she can cherishe,
 And mylken [hem] as doth a norys;
 And of hir goodè to hem deles,
 And yeveth hem parte of her joweles,
 With grete richesse and dignite; 5420
 And hem she hoteth stabilite
 In a state that is not stable,
 But chaungynge ay and variable;
 And fedith hym with glorie veyne,
 In worldly blisse noncerteyne.
 Whanne she hem settith on hir whele
 Thanne wenè they to be right wele,
 And in so stable state withall
 That never they wenè forto falle. 5430
 And whanne they sette so highè be,
 They were to have in certeynte

Of hertly freendis so grete noubre
 That no thyng myght her state encombre.
 They trust hem so on every side,
 Wenying with hem they wolde abide
 In every perell and myschaunce,
 Withoutè chaunge or variaunce
 Bóthe of catell and of goode.
 And also forto spende her bloode, 5440
 And all her membris forto spille,
 Oonly to fulfille her wille.
 They maken it hole in many wise,
 And hoten hem her full servise,
 How sorè that it do hem smerte,
 Into her naked sherte.
 Herte and all so hole they yive,
 For the tyme that they may lyve.
 Só that with her flaterie,
 They maken foolis glorifie 5450
 Of her wordis spekyng,
 And han ther-of a rejoysyng,
 And trowe hem as the Evangile:
 And it is all falsheede and gile,
 As they shal astirwardè se
 Whanne they am falle in poverte,
 And ben of good and catell bare;
 Thanneshulde theysene who freendis ware.
 For of an hundred certeynly,
 Nor of a thousande full scarsly, 5460
 Ne shal they synde unneithis oon
 Whanne poverté is comen unon.
 For this Fortune that I of telle
 With men whanne hir lust to dwelle,
 Makith hem to leese her conisaunce,
 And norishith hem in ignoraunce.

But froward Fortune and perverse,
 Whanne high estatis she doth reverse,
 And maketh hem to tumble doune
 Of hir whele, with sodeyn tourne, 5470
 And from her richesse doth hem fle,
 And plongeth hem in poverte,
 As a stepmoder envyous
 And leieth a plastre dolorous
 Unto her hertis wounded egre,
 Which is not tempered with vynegre

5393. MSS. *late all*.5399. MSS. *wel I wot*.5401. *For*, (?) read *Full*, 'moult.'5405. Cp. *Bocce*, 583 ff.5408. *at all* (MSS. *it all*), altogether.5419. *deles*, (?) *dele* infinitive construed with *can* and rhyming with *joweles*; cp. v. 2092. If so, read *yve* in v. 5420.5426. *In*, MSS. *And*, Fr. 'en.'5433. *so*, MSS. *to*, Fr. 'tant.'5452. *ther-of*, MSS. *cheer of*, (Kaluza).5463. *this*, MSS. *thus*, 'ciste.'5470. *Of*, off.5473. The *And* of next verse seems to belong before *As*, else v. 5474 precedes v. 5473.Et lor assiet comme marastre
 Au cuer un dolereus einplastre.

But with poverte and indigence---
 Forto shewe by experience
 That she is Fortune verelye,
 In whom no man shulde affye, 5480
 Nor in hir yeftis have fiauunce,
 She is so full of variaunce.
 Thus kan she maken high and lowe,
 Whanne they from riches earn [y-]throwe,
 Fully to knowen without were
 Freend of affect and freend of chere ;
 And which in love were trewe and stable,
 And whiche also were variable,
 After Fortune her goddessse,
 In poverte outhir in richesse. 5490
 For all she yeveth here, out of drede,
 Unhappe bereveth it in dede ;
 For in-fortune late not oon
 Of freendis, whanne Fortune is gone--
 I mene tho freendis that wole fle
 Anoon, as entreth poverte ;
 And yit they wole not leve hem so,
 But in ech placé where they go,
 They calle hem "wrecché," scorne, and
 blame,
 And of her myshappe hem diffame. 5500
 And namely siche as in richesse
 Pretendid moost of stablenesse,
 Whanne that they sawe hym sette on lofte,
 And were of hym socoured ofte,
 And most yholpe in all her neede ;
 But now they take no maner heede,
 But seyn in voice of flaterie,
 That now apperith her folye
 Over-all where so they fare,
 And syngé "Go fare-wel, feldefare." 5510
 All suché freendis I beshrewe,
 For of trewe ther be to fewe.
 But sotlfast freendis, what so bitide,
 In every fortune wolen abide ;
 Thei han her hertis in suche noblesse
 That they nyl love for no richesse,
 Nor for that fortune may hem sende

Thei wolen hem socoure and defende,
 And chaunge for softe ne for sore ;
 For who is freend loveth evermore. 5520
 Though men draweswerde his freend to slo,
 He may not hewe her love a-two,
 But in case that I shall sey ;
 For pride and ire lese it he may,
 And for reprove by nycete,
 And discovering of privity ;
 With tonge woundyng as feloun,
 Thurgh venomous detraccioun.
 Frende in this case wole gone his way,
 For no thyng greve hym more ne may,
 And for nought ellis wole he fle, 5531
 If that he love in stabilite.
 And certeyn he is wel bigone,
 Among a thousand that fyndith oon ;
 For ther may be no richesse
 Ageyns frendshipp of worthynesse ;
 For it ne may so high atteigne
 As may the valoure, soth to seyne,
 Of hym that loveth trew and well.
 Frendshipp is more than is catell, 5540
 For freend in court ay better is,
 Than peny in purs certis.
 And Fortune myshappyng,
 Whanne upon men she is fallyng
 Thurgh mysturnyng of hir chaunce,
 And casteth hem oute of balaunce,
 She makith thurgh hir adversite
 Men full clerly forto se
 Hym that is freend in existence,
 From hym that is by apparence. 5550
 For yn-fortune makith anoon,
 To knowe thy freendis fro thy foon,
 By experience right as it is.
 The which is more to preise y-wis,
 Than is myche richesse and tresour.
 For more dothe profit and valour
 Poverte and such adversite
 Bi fer than doth prosperite ;
 For the toon yeveth consyaunce,
 And the tother ignorance. 5560
 And thus in poverte is in dede
 Tróuth declared fro falsheed,
 For feynted frendis it wole declare,
 And trewe also what way they fare.

5486. *affect*, see *New English Dictionary*, s.v.5486. Cp. Chaucer's *Fortune*, v. 34, and *Boece*, 590 ff.5491. *she*, MSS. *that*; 'Car ceus que beneurte donne.'5493. *late*, (?) *leveth*, 'remain.'5493. *oon* is subject of *late*, 'remains.'5502. MSS. *pretendith*.5510. *Go fare-wel*, etc., v. *New English Dict.* under *Farewell*.5519. *And*. *Ne* with semicolon after *sende* would make better sense.5544. *fallyng*, MS. *fablyng*, 'cheans.'

For whanne he was in his richesse,
 These freendis ful of doublenesse
 Offrid hym in many wise
 Hért, and body, and servise ;
 What wolde he thanne hayove to ha boughit
 To knowen openly her thought, 5570
 That he now hath so clerly seen ?
 The lasse bigiled he shulde have bene,
 And he hadde thanne perceyved it ;
 But richesse nold not late hym witte.
 Wel more avauntage doth hym thanne,
 Sith that it makith hym a wise man,
 The gret myscheef that he receyveth,
 Than doth richesse that hym deceyveth.
 Richesse riché ne makith nought
 Hym that on tresour sette his thought,
 For richesse stonte in suffisaunce 5581
 And no-thing in habundaunce ;
 For suffisaunce all oonly
 Makith men to lyvé richély.
 For he that at mycches tweyne,
 Ne valued [is] in his demeine,
 Lyveth more at ese, and more is riche,
 Than doth he that is chiche,
 And in his berne hath, soth to seyn,
 An hundred mowis of whete greyne, 5590
 Though he be chapman or marchaunte,
 And have of golde many [a] besaunte.
 For in the getyng he hath such woo,
 And in the keypyng drede also,
 And sette evermore his bisynesse
 Forto encrese, and not to lesse,
 Forto aument and multiplie.
 And though on hepis that lye hym bye
 Vit never shal maké his richesse
 Asseth unto his gredynesse. 5600
 But the povere that recchith nought,
 Save of his lyslode, in his thought,
 Which that he getith with his travaile,

5569. *youe*, MSS. *youe*, p. pt. of *yive*. Read to *ha* as one word. The thought is borrowed from Boethius; see Chaucer's *Boece*, 590.

5573. *And, if*.

5577. *receyveth*, MSS. *perceyveth*, 'recoit.'

5585. *at*, MSS. *hath*. 'Car tex n'a pas voillant deus mi-hes.'

5586. *Ne valued is*, MSS. *Ne value*; cp. v. above.

5590. *mowis*, MSS. *maris*, 'muis.'

5598. *that*, i.e. the gold; (?) read *they*, referring to the *besauntes*.

5599. He shall never make his riches satisfy (*asseth*) his greed.

He dredith nought that it shall failé,
 Though he have lytel worldis goode,
 Mete, and drynke, and esy foode,
 Upon his travel and lyvyng,
 And also suffisaunt clothyng,
 Or if in syknesse that he fall,
 And lothé mete and drynke withall, 5610
 Though he have not his mete to bye
 He shal bithynke hym hastily
 To putte hym oute of all daunger,
 That he of mete hath no mystei ;
 Or that he may with lytel eke
 Be founden, while that he is seke ;
 Or that men shull hym berne in haste,
 To lyvé til his syknesse be paste,
 Tó somme maysondewe biside ; 5619
 Or he caste nought what shal hym bitide—
 He thenkith nought that evere he shall
 Into ony syknessé fall.
 And though it falle, as it may be,
 That all be-tymé spare shall he
 As mochel, as shal to hym suffice
 While he is sike in ony wise,
 He doth [that] for that he wole be
 Cōtente with his poverté,
 Withouté nede of ony man.
 So myche in litel have he can, 5630
 He is apaid with his fortune ;
 And for he nyl be inportune
 Unto no wight, ne honerous,
 Nor of her goodés covetous,
 Therefore he spareth, it may wel bene,
 His pore estate forto sustene.
 Or if hym lust not forto spare,
 But suffrith forth as not ne ware,
 Atte last it hapneth as it may
 Right unto his lasté day, 5640
 And taketh the world as it wolde be ;
 For evere in herté thenkith he,
 The sonner that [the] deth hym slo,
 To paradys the sonner go
 He shal, there forto lyve in blisse,

5617. *berne for beren* ; cp. *myxnes*, v. 6496.

5620. Or supplied from Fr. 'ou.'

5638, 5639. Fr.

Amis viennent li froit et li chaut
 En la fin qui moir le face ;

so perhaps read :

But sultrith frost as hot ne ware,
 He lit it hapne as it may

5641. MSS. *takr*.

Where that he shal noo good misse ;
 Thider he hopith God shal hym sende,
 Aftir his wrecchid lyves ende.
 Pictagoras hym silf rehersed
 In a book, that the Golden Verises 5650
 Is clepid for the nobilite
 Of the honourable ditee,
 That whanne thou goste thy body fro,
 Fre in the eir thou shalt up go,
 And leven al humanite,
 And purely lyve in deite.
 He is a foole withouten were
 That trowith have his Countre heere ;
 In erthe is not oure Countre— 5659
 That may these clerkis seyn, and see
 In Boice of Consolacioun,
 Where it is makéd mencion
 Of oure countre pleyn at the ye
 By teching of Philosophie ;
 Where lewid men myght leré witte,
 Who so that wolde translaten it
 If he be sich that can wel lyve
 Aftir his renté may hym yive,
 And not desireth more to have,
 Than may fro poverte hym save. 5670
 A wise man seide, as we may seen,
 Is no man wrecche but he it wene,
 Be he kyng, knyght, or ribaude ;
 And many a ribaude is mery and baude
 That swynkith and berith bothe day and
 nyght
 Many a burthen of gret myght,
 The whiché doth hym lasse offense
 For he suffriþ in pacience.
 They laugh and dauncé, trippe and synge,
 And ley not up for her lyvyng, 5680
 But in the tavernne all dispendith
 The wynnyng that God hem sendith.
 Thanne goth he fardeles forto bere,
 With as good chere as he didé ere ;
 To swynke and traveile he not feynith.
 For for to robben he disdeynith ;
 But right anon aftir his swynke

5650. (?) Omit *the* ; there is no article in the Fr. The book referred to is the *Aurra Camina*, extant in the Middle Ages as a work of Pythagoras.

5653. *That*, MSS. *Thanne*.

5661. of *Consolacioun*, 'de Consolacione.' Jehan de Meung refers to I, pt. v.

5663. MSS. *cye*.

5672. MSS. *wrecched* ; cp. *Bocce*, 394.

He goth to tavernne forto drynke.
 All these ar riche in abundaunce,
 That can thus havé suffisaunce 5690
 Wel more than can an usurere,
 As God wel knowith, withoute were.
 For an usurer, so God me se,
 Shal nevere for richesse riché be,
 But evermore pore and indigent,
 Scarce and gredy in his entent.

For soth it is, whom it displese,
 Ther may no marchaunt lyve at ese.
 His herte in sich a werre is sett,
 That it quyk brenneth more to gete, 5700
 Ne never shal enough have geten,
 Though he have gold in gerneris yeten.
 Forto be nedy he dredith soie,
 Wherefore to geten more and more
 He sette his herte and his desire.
 So hote he brennyth in the fire,
 Of coveitise, that makith hym woode
 To purchase other mennés goode.
 He undirfongith a gret payne
 That undirtakith to drynke up Seyne ;
 For the more he drynkith ay 5711
 The more he leveth, the soth to say.

Thus is thurst of fals getyng,
 That laste ever in coveityng,
 And the angwisshe and distresse,
 With the fine of gredynesse.
 She fightith with hym ay and stryveth,
 That his herte a-sondre ryveth ;
 Such gredynesse hym assaylith,
 That whanne he most hath, most he failith.
 Phisiciens and advocates 5721

Góne right by the samé yates ;
 They selle her science for wynnyng,
 And haunte her craste for gret getyng.
 Her wynnyng is of such swetnesse,
 That if a man falle in sikenesse,
 They are full glad for ther encrese ;
 For by her wille, withouté lees,
 Everiché man shuldé be seke, 5729
 And though they die, they settenot a leke.
 After, whanne they the gold have take,
 Full litel care for hem they make ;
 They wolde that fourty wereseke atony—

5701. *enough have*, MSS. *though he hath* (Kaluza).

5706. Cp. *Bocce*, 325.

5713. Kaluza reads *This* for *Thus*.

Ye ii hundred in flesh and bonyes,
 And yit ii thousand, as I gesse,
 Forto encrecen her richesse.
 They wole not worchen in no wise,
 Bút for lucre and covetise.
 For Fysic gynneth first by 'Fy'
 (The Phisicien also sothely);
 And sithen it goth fro "Fy" to "Sy,"
 To truste on hem [it] is foly,
 For they nyl, in no maner gre,
 Dó right nought for charite.

Eke in the samé secte ar sette
 All tho that prechen forto gete
 Wórshipes, honour, and richesse.
 Her hertis arn in grete distresse,
 That folk [ne] lyve not holly.
 But aboven all specialy
 Sich as prechen [in] veynglorie,
 And toward god have no memorie,
 But forth as ypcocrités trace,
 And to her soulés deth purchase
 An outward shewing holynesse,
 Though they be full of cursidnesse,
 Not liche to the apostles twelve.
 They deceyve other and hem selve;
 Bigiléd is the giler thanne,
 For prechyng of a curséd man
 Though [it] to other may profite,
 Hymself it vailleth not a myte.
 For ofte goode predicacioun
 Cómeth of evel entencioun.
 To hym not vailith his preching,
 All helpe he other with his teching.
 For where they good ensaunple take,
 There is he with veynglorie shake.
 But late us leven these prechours,
 And speke of hem that in her toures
 Hepe up her gold, and lasté shette,
 And sore theron her herté sette.
 They neither lové God ne drede,
 They kepé more than it is nede,
 And in her baggés sore it bynde;

5739-5742. The key of the pun is found in v. 5742: 'Phys-yc' goes from 'fying' = trusting, to 'sying' = sighing and groaning. The joke was probably an old one in our author's time, for it depends for its fullest point on the earlier form of 'sien,' viz. 'sicen,' still used by Chaucer, and by the translator of the 'A' part of the Romaunt (cp. v. 1641).

5755. MSS. *au*, MSS. *And*.

5762. MSS. *availeth*; cp. v. 5765.

Out of the sonne, and of the wynde,
 They putte up more than nedé ware.
 Whanne they seen pore folk forfare,
 For hunger die, and for cold quake,
 God can wel vengeaunce therof take.
 Thre gret myschevé's hem assailith,
 And thus in gadiing ay travaylith:
 With mychel payne they wyne richesse,
 And drede hem holdith in distresse
 To kepé that they gadre faste,
 With sorwe they leve it at the laste;
 With sorwe they bothé dye and lyve
 That unto richesse her hertis yive.
 And in defaute of love it is,
 As it shewith ful wel I-wys;
 For if this gredy, the sothe to scyn,
 Loveden and were loved ageyn,
 And goodé Love regned over-all,
 Such wikkidnesse ne shuldé fall.
 But he shulde yeve, that most good hadde,
 To hem that weren in nede bistadde;
 And lyve withouté false usure,
 For charite, full clene and pure.
 If they hem yevé to goodnesse,
 Defendyng hem from ydelnesse,
 In all this world thanne pover noon
 We shuldé fynde, I trowe not oon.
 But chaungéd is this world unstable,
 For love is over-all vendable;
 We se that no man loveth nowé,
 Bút for wynnyng and for prove.
 And love is thralléd in servage,
 Whanne it is sold for avauntage;
 Yit wommen wole her bodyes selle—
 Suche soules goth to the devel of helle.

Whanne Love hadde told hem his entent,

5811. *power*, MSS. *foie*; cp. v. 6489.

5811. The translation is here interrupted, ll. 5137-10694 of the French (*Michel*, i. p. 171, l. 5876—p. 355, l. 11443; *Marteau*, ii. p. 70, l. 5397—iii. p. 48, l. 11060) not having been translated. The following is a synopsis (abridged from Bell's Chaucer) of the missing portion:—Reason shows the vanity of natural love and the caprice of Fortune, and exhorts l'Amant to fix his heart on Charity. l'Amant maintains his loyalty to the God of Love, and Reason leaves him. He then consults l'Ami, who advises him to approach Bel-Acueil's prison by a road called Trop-Donner, constructed by Largesse. l'Ami then gives l'Amant directions as to how he is to conduct himself towards his mistress and his wife, and leaves him to pursue his adventure. l'Amant

The baronage to counceel went ; 5812
 In many sentences they fille,
 And dyversly they seide hir wille.
 But aftir discorde they accorded,
 And her accord to Love recorded :
 'Sir,' seiden they, 'we ben atone
 Bi evene accorde of everichone,
 Outaké Richesse al oonly,
 That sworne hath ful hauteynly, 5820
 That she the castell nyl not assaile,
 Ne smyte a stroke in this bataile
 With darte ne macé, spere ne knyf,
 For man that spekith or berith the lyf,
 And blameth youre emprise, I-wys,
 And from oure hoost departed is,
 Atte lest wey as in this plyte,
 So hath she this man in dispite.
 For, she seith, he ne loved hir never,
 And therfore she wole hate hym evere.
 For he wole gadre no tresoure, 5831
 He hath hir wrath for evermore ;
 He agylte hir never in other caas,
 Lo, heere all hoolly his trespas.
 She seith wel that this other day
 He axide hir leve to gone the way
 That is clepid "To-moche-yevyng,"
 And spak full faire in his praiyng.
 But whanne he praide hir, pore was he,
 Therfore she warned hym the entre ; 5840
 Ne yit is he not thryven so
 That he hath geten a peny or two,
 That quytyl is his owne, in holde.
 Thus hath Richesse us all[é] tolde ;
 And whanne Richesse us this recorded,
 Withouten hir we ben accoided.
 And we fynde in oure accordaunce
 That False-Semblant and Abstinaunce,
 With all the folk of her bataille,
 Shull at the hyndre gate assaile, 5850
 That Wikkid-Tunge hath in kepyng
 With his Normans full of janglyng ;
 And with hem Curtesie and Largesse,
 That shall shewe her hardynesse
 To the oldé wyf, that kepte so harde
 Fair-Welcomyng withynne her warde ;

approaches the castle, but Richesse bars his entrance. The God of Love comes to his assistance, first convoking a council of his barons. Here the English begins again.

5856. *Fair-Welcomyng*, hitherto called *Bialacoil*.

Thanne shal Delite and Wel-Heelynge
 Fónde Shame adowne to brynge,
 With all her oost early and late
 They shull assailen that ilké gate ; 5860
 Agaynes Drede shall Hardynesse
 Assaile, and also Sikernessee
 With all the folk of her ledyng,
 That never wist what was fleyng ;
 Fraunchise shall fight and eke Pite
 With Daunger, full of Cruelte ;
 Thus is youre hoost ordeyned wele.
 Doune shall the castell every-dede,
 If everiché do his entent,
 Só that Venus be present, 5870
 Youre modir full of vesselage
 That can ynough of such usage.
 Withouten hir may no wight spede
 This werk, neithir for word ne deede ;
 Therfore is good ye for hir sende,
 For thurgh hir may this werk amende.'

'Lordynges, my modir, the goddesse,
 That is my lady and my maistresse,
 Nis not [at] all at my willyng,
 Ne doth not all my desiryng ; 5880
 Yit can she some tyme done labour,
 Whanne that hir lust, in my socour,
 As my nede is forto a-cheve.
 But now I thenke hir not to geve ;
 My modir is she, and of childehede,
 I bothé worshipec hir and drede.
 For who that dredith sire ne dame,
 Shal it abyce in body or name.
 And netheles yit kunné we
 Sende aftir hir if nedé be ; 5890
 And were she nygh she comen wolde,
 I trowe that no thyng myght hir holde.
 Mi modir is of gret prowesse,
 She hath tan many a forteressee,
 That cost hath many a pounde, er this,
 There I nas not present y-wis ;
 And yit men seide it was my dede.
 But I come never in that stede,
 Ne me ne likith, so mote I the, 5899
 That suche toures ben take withoute me,
 For why me thenkith that in no wise
 It may bene clepid but marchandise.

5883. *As my nede is*. Kaluza reads *Al my nedis*, and perhaps rightly ; 'mes besoignes,' 'affairs,' read as 'mes, besoignes' ('needs'). Cp. similar translation in *Boece*, 147.

5886. MSS. *the drede*.

Go bye a courser, blak or white,
 And pay therefore, than art thou quyte ;
 The marchaunt owith thee right nought,
 Né thou hym, whanne thou it bought.
 I wole not sellyng clepé "yevyng,"
 For sellyng axeth no guerdonyng,
 Here lith no thanke ne no merite ;
 That oon goth from that other al quyte.
 But this sellyng is not semblable ; 5911
 For whanne his hors is in the stable,
 He may it selle ageyn, parde,
 And wynnen on it, such happe may be ;
 All may the man not leese I-wys,
 For at the leest the skynne is his.
 Or ellis if it so bitide
 That he wole kepe his hors to ride,
 Yit is he lord ay of his hors.
 But thilké chaffare is wel wors, 5920
 There Venus entremetith ought.
 For who-so such chaffare hath bought,
 He shal not worchen so wisely,
 That he ne shal leese al outery
 Bóthe his money and his chaffare.
 But the seller of the ware
 The prys and profit havé shall,
 Certeyn the biér shal leese all.
 For he ne can so dere it bye
 To have lordship and full maistrie, 5930
 Ne have power to maké lettyng
 Neithir for yift ne for prechyng,
 That of his chaffare, maugre his,
 Another shal have asmoche, I-wis,
 If he wole yeve as myche as he,
 Of what contrey so that he be ;
 Or for right nought, so happé may,
 If he can flater hir to hir pay.
 Bén thanne sich marchauntz wise ?
 Nó but fooles in every wise, 5940
 Whanne they bye sich thyng wilfully
 There as they leese her good fully.
 But nathéles this dar I say,
 My modir is not wont to pay,
 For she is neither so fool ne nyce
 To entremete hir of sich vyce.
 But trusteth wel he shal pay all,
 That répent of his bargeyn shall,

5915. *All* is object of *leese*.5931. *make lettyng*, i.e. put hindrance in his way.5942. *fully*, MSS. *folly*, 'ou tant perdent.'5947. MSS. *trust*.

Whanne poverte putte hym in distresse,
 All were he scoler to Richesse, 5950
 That is for me in gret yernyng
 Whanne she assentith to my willyng.
 But [by] my modir seint Venus,
 And by hir fader Saturnus,
 That hir engendride by his lyf
 (But not upon his weddid wyf)—
 Yit wole I more unto you swere
 To make this thyng the sikerere :—
 Now by that feith and that leaute
 That I owe to all my britheren fre, 5960
 Of which ther nys wight undir heven
 That kan her fadris names neven,
 So dyverse and so many ther be,
 That with my modir have be prive ;
 Yit wolde I swere for sikirnesse,
 The pole of helle to my witnesse,
 Now drynke I not this yeere claie,
 If that I lye or forsworne be !
 (For of the goddes the usage is,
 That who so hym forswereth amys 5970
 Shal that yeer drynké no clare.)
 Now have I sworne ynough pardec,
 If I forswere me, thanne am I lorne—
 But I wole never be forsworne.
 Syth Richesse hath me failed heere,
 She shal alye that trespas dere,
 Atté leest wey but hir arme
 With swerd, or sparth or [with] gysarme.
 For certis sith she loveth not me
 Fro thilké tyme that she may se 5980
 The castell and the tour to-shake,
 In sory tyme she shal awake.
 If I may grype a riché man,
 I shal so pulle hym, if I can,
 That he shal in a fewé stoundes
 Leese all his markis and his poundis ;
 I shal hym make his pens outsylngé,
 But they in his gerner spryngé,
 Oure maydens shal eke pluk hym so,
 That hym shal neden fetheres mo, 5990
 And make hym selle his londe to spende,
 But he the bet kunne hym defende.
 Pore men han maad her lord of me ;

5958. *sikerere*, MSS. *seuerer*, (Kaluza's emendation) based on vv. 6147. 7308.5959. *leaute*, MSS. *beaute*. The same error occurs in v. 6006.5976. *dere*, MSS. *ful dere*, 'chiers.'

5988. 'S'il ne li sourdent en greniers.'

Al though they not so myghty be
 That they may fede me in delite,
 I wole not have hem in despire;
 No good man hateth hem as I gesse.
 For chynche and feloun is richesse;
 That so can chase hym and dispise,
 And hem defoule in sondry wise. 6000
 They loven full bet, so God me
 spede,

Than doth the richè chynchy gnedé;
 And ben in goode feith moré stable,
 And trewer and more serviable.
 And therfore it suffisith me
 Her goodè herte and her leaute.
 They han on me sette all her thought,
 And therfore I forgete hem nought;
 I wolde hem bringe in grete noblesse,
 If that I were god of richesse, 6010
 As I am god of love sothely,
 Sich routhe upon her pleynt have I.
 Therfore I must his socour be
 That peyneth hym to serven me,
 For if he deide for love of this,
 Thanne semeth in me no love ther is.

'Sir,' seide they, 'soth is every deel
 That ye herce, and we wote wel
 Thilke oth to holde is resonable.
 For it is good and covenable 6020
 That ye on richè men han sworne;
 For, Sir, this wote we wel biforne:
 If Richè men done you homage,
 That is, as foolès done, outrage.
 But ye shull not forsworn be,
 Ne lette, therefore, to drynke clarie
 Or pyment makid fresh and newe.
 Ladies shull hem such pepir brewe,
 If that they fall into her laas, 6029
 That they for woo mowe seyn, "Allas!"
 Ladyes shullen evere so curteis be,
 That they shal quyte youre oth all
 free.

Ne sekith never othir vicaire,
 For they shal speke with hem so faire,
 That ye shal holde you prised full wele,
 Though ye you medle never a dele.
 Late ladies worchè with her thyngis
 They shal hem telle so fele tidynges,
 And move hem eke so many requestis,
 Bi flateri, that not honest is; 6040

6002. MSS. *grede* for *gnede*.

And therto yeve hym such thankynges,
 What with kissing, and with talkynges,
 That certis, if they trowèd be,
 Shal never leve hem longe ne fee,
 That it nyl as the moeble fare
 Of which they first delyverid are.
 Now may ye telle us all youre wille,
 And we youre heestès shal fulfille.

But Fals-Semblaunt dar not for drede
 Of you, Sir, medle hym of this dede;
 For he seith that ye ben his foo, 6051
 He note if ye wole worche hym woo.
 Wherfore we pray you alle, Beausire,
 That ye forgyve hym now your Ire,
 And that he may dwelle as your man
 With Abstinence, his dere lemman.
 Thisoure accord and oure wille nowe.'
 'Parfay,' seide Love, 'I graunte it yowe;
 I wole wel holde hym for my man, 6059
 Now late hym come.' And he forth ran.
 'Fals-Semblaunt,' quod Love, 'in this wise
 I take thee heere to my servise,
 That thou oure freendis helpe away,
 And hyndreth hem neithir nyght ne day,
 But do thy myght hem to releve;
 And eke oure eneyen that thou greve;
 Thyne be this myght, I graunte it thee,
 My Kyng of Harlotes shalt thou be,
 We wole that thou have such honour.
 Certeyne thou art a fals traitour, 6070
 And eke a thief; sith thou were borne,
 A thousand tyme thou art forsworne;
 But nethèles in oure heryng,
 To putte oure folk out of doutyng
 I bidde thee teche hem, wostowe howe,
 Bi somme general signè nowe,
 In what place thou shalt founden be,
 If that men had myster of thee,
 And how men shal thee best espye;
 For thee to knowe is gret maistrice. 6080
 Telle in what place is thyn hauntynge.'
 'Sir, I have felè dyverse wonyng,
 That I kepe not rehersed be;
 So that ye wolde respiten me.

6041, 6042. *thankynges*, 'coleses'; Kaluza suggests *thwakkynges*. Similarly *talkynges* does not seem happy for 'acoleses'; (?) read *wakynges*, cp. vv. 2682, 4272.

6057. *This*, this is.

6068. *Kyng of Harlotes*, 'rois des ribauds,' i.e. provost-marshal.

For if that I tellé you the sothe,
 I may have harme and shamé bothe ;
 If that my felowes wisten it,
 My talis shulden me be quytt,
 For certeyne they wolde haté me
 If ever I knewe her cruelte. 6090
 For they wolde overall holde hem stille
 Of trouthe that is ageyne her wille ;
 Suche tales kepen they not here.
 I myght eftsoone bye it full deere,
 If I seide of hem any thing
 That ought displesith to her heryng.
 Forwhat word that hem prikketh orbiteth,
 In that word noon of hem deliteth,
 Al were it gospel the Evangile,
 That wolde reprove hem of her gile. 6100
 For they are cruel and hauteyne,
 And this thyng wote I well certeyne ;
 If I speke ought to peire her loos,
 Your court shal not so well be cloos
 That they ne shall wite it atté last.
 Of good men am I nought agast,
 For they wole taken on hem no thyng,
 Whanne that they knowe al my menyng.
 But he that wole it on hym take,
 He wole him-silf suspicius make 6110
 That he his lyf let covertly,
 In gile and in Ipocrisie
 That me engendred and yaf fostryng.
 'They made a full good engendryng,
 Quod Love, 'for who so sothly telle,
 They engendred the Devel of Helle.
 But nedely, how so evere it be,'
 Quod Love, 'I wole and chargé thee
 To telle anon thy wonyng places, 6119
 Heryng ech wight that in this place is,
 And what lyf that thou lyvest also ;
 Hlde it no lenger now--Wherto ?
 Thou most discovere all thi wurchyng,
 How thou servest, and of what thyng,
 Though that thoushuldist for thisothe-sawe
 Ben alto beten and to-drawe.
 And yit art thou not wont pardee.
 But natheles though thou beten be,
 Thou shalt not be the first that so
 Háth for sothsawe suffred woo.' 6130
 'Sir, sith that it may liken you,
 Though that I shulde be slayne right now,
 I shal done youre comaundément,

6111. *let, leads.*

For therto have I gret talent.
 Withouten wordis no right thanne
 Fals-Semblant his sermon biganne,
 And seide hem thus in audience :
 'Barouns, take heede of my sentence :
 That wight that list to have knowing
 Of Fals-Semblant, full of flatering, 6140
 He must in worldly folk hym seke,
 And certes in the cloistres eke,
 I wone no where but in hem twey ;
 But not lyk even, soth to sey.
 Shortly, I wole herberwe me
 There I hope best to holstred be ;
 And certynly sikerest hidyng,
 Is undirnethe humblest clothing.
 Religious folk ben full covert,
 Seculer folk ben more appert. 6150
 But natheles I wole not blame
 Religious folk, ne hem disfame ;
 In what habit that ever they go,
 Religious unble and trewe also,
 Wole I not blamé, ne dispise,
 But I nyl love it in no wise--
 I mene of false religious,
 That stoute ben and malicious,
 That wolen in an abit goo,
 And setten not her herte therto. 6160
 Religious folk ben al pitous,
 Thou shalt not seen oon dispitous ;
 They loven no pridé, ne no strif,
 But humbely they wole lede her lyf.
 With which folk wole I never be,
 And if I dwelle, I feyne me.
 I may wel in her abit go,
 But me were lever my nekke a-two
 Than lete a purpose that I take,
 What covenaut that ever I make. 6170
 I dwelle with hem that proudé be,
 And full of wiles and subtilte,
 That worship of this world coveiten,
 And grete nedes kunnen espleiten,
 And gone and gadren gret pitaunces,
 And purchase hem the acqweyntaunces
 Of men that myghty lyf may leden,
 And feyne hem pore, and hem silf feden
 With godé morcelles delicious,

6146. MSS. *kulstred.*

6172. MSS. *subtilite*

6174. MSS. *grete nede*, 'les grans besoigne,'
 cp. note to 5883.

And drinken good wyne precious, 6180
 And preche us povert and distresse,
 And fisshen hem silf gret richesse
 With wily nettis that they cast ;
 It wole come foule out at the last.
 They ben fro clene religioun went,
 They make the world an argument,
 That [hath] a foule conclusioun :
 " I have a robe of religioun,
 Thanne am I all religious."

This argument is all roigouns, 6190
 It is not worth a croked breie ;
 Abit ne makith neithir monk ne frere,
 But clene lyf and devocioun
 Makith godé men of religioun.
 Néthèles ther kan noon answeie,
 How high that evere his heed he shere
 With rasour whettid never so kene,
 That Gile in branches kut thrittene ;
 Ther can no wight distincte it so,
 That he dare sey a word therto. 6200

But what herberwe that ever I take
 Or what Semblant that evere I make,
 I mene but gile, and folowe that.
 For right no mo than Gibbe oure cat,
 That awaiteth myce and rattes to kyllen,
 Ne entende I but to bigilen.
 Ne no wight may by my clothing
 Wite with what folk is my dwellyng,
 Ne by my wordis yit, pade,
 So softe and so plesaunt they be. 6210
 Biholde the dedis that I do,
 But thou be blynde thou oughtest so.
 For varie her wordis fro her deede,
 They theken on gile withouté dreede,
 What maner clothing that they were
 Or what estate that evere they bere
 Lered or lewdé, lord or lady,
 Knyght, squyér, bungeis, or bayly.'

Right thus while Fals - Semblant
 sermoneth 6220
 Eftsones Love hym aresoneth,
 And brake his tale in his spekyng,
 As though he had hym tolde lesyng,

6197. MSS. *rasoun* for *rasour*.

6198. *That* has *noon* for its antecedent, and the allusion is to the twelve monks and prior who made up a convent.

6204. *Gibbe*, i.e. 'Gib,' a common English name for a cat.

6205. Only in Th., but found in Fr.

6206. G *bigilyng*.

And seide, ' What Devel is that I here?
 What folk hast thou us nempned heere ?
 Máy men syndé religioun
 In worldly habitacioun ?'
 ' Ye, Sir, it folowith not that they
 Shulde lede a wikked lyf, parfey,
 Ne not therfore her soulés leese,
 That hem to worldly clothés chese ; 6230
 For certis it were gret pitee.
 Men may in seculer clothés see
 Florishen hooly religioun.
 Full many a seynt in feeld and tounne,
 With many a virgine glorious,
 Devoute and full religious
 Han deied, that comyn cloth ay beeren,
 Yit seyntés nevere the lesse they weren.
 I cowlde reken you many a ten, 6239
 Ye wel nygh [al] these hooly wymmen,
 That men in chirchis herie and seke,
 Bothe maydens and these wyves eke,
 That baren full many a faire child heere,
 Wered alwey clothis seculere,
 And in the samé dieden they,
 That seyntes weren, and ben alwey.
 The xi. thousand maydens deere,
 That beren in heven her cierge clere,
 Of whiche men rede in chirche and synge,
 Were take in seculer clothing, 6250
 Whanne they resseyv'd martirdome,
 And women hevene unto her home.
 Good herté makith the goodé thought,
 The clothing yeveth ne reveth nought ;
 The goodé thought and the worching
 That makith the religioun flowryng—
 Ther lyth the goode religioun,
 Afir the right entencioun.

Whoso took a wether's skynne,
 And wrapped a gredy wolf therynne 6260
 For he shulde go with lumbis whyte,
 Wenest thou not he wolde hem bite ?
 Yis, neverthelasse, as he were woode,
 He wolde hem wery and drinke ther
 bloode,
 And wel the rather hem disceyve ;
 For sith they cowlde not perceyve
 His treget and his cruelte,
 They wolde hym folowe al wolde he fle.
 If ther be wolves of sich hewe

6243. Perhaps omit *full*.

6264. MSS. *the bloode*, 'lor sanc.'

Amonges these apostlis newe, 6270
Thou, Hooly Chirche, thou maist be
wailed,

Sith that thy Citee is assayed
Thourgh knyghtis of thyn owné table.
God wote thi lordship is doutable,
If thei enforce [hem] it to wyne,
That shulde defende it fro withynne.

Who myght defense ayens hem make ?
Withouté stroke it mote be take
Of trepetet, or mangonel, 6280
Without displaiyng of pensel.

And if God nyl done it socour,
But lat [it] renne in this colour,
Thou most thyn heestis laten be ;
Thanne is ther nought but yeldé thee,
Or yeve hem tribute doutlees,
And holde it of hem to have pees.
But gretter harme bitideth thee
That they al maister of it be.

Wel konne they scorné thee withal ;
By dayé stuffen they the walle, 6290
And al the nyght they mynen there.
Nay, thou planten most elles where
Thyn ympés, if thou wolt fruyt have ;
Abide not there thi-silf to save.

But now pees ! Heere I turne ageyne,
I wole nomore of this thing seyne,
If I may passen me herby.
I myghté maken you wery ;
But I wole heten you al-way
To helpe youre freendis, what I may, 6300

Só they wollen my company ;
For they be shent al outerly,
But if so fallé that I be
Ófte with hem and they with me.

And eke my lemman mote they serve,
Or they shull not my love deserve.

Forsothe I am a fals traitour,
God jugged me for a theef trichour ;
Forsworne I am, but wel nygh none
Wote of my gile til it be done. 6310

Thurgh me hath many oon deth
resseyved,

That my treget nevere aperceyved ;
And yit resseyveth, and shal resseyve,

6281. 'Et se d'eus (misread as *deus*) ne la vies rescorre.'

6290. MSS. *day*. Skeat supplies *wel* before *stuffen*.

That my falsnesse shal nevere aperceyve.
But who so doth, if he wise be,
Hym is right good be war of me.

But so slich is the deceyvyng
That to hard is the aperceyvyng.
For Protheus, that cowde hym chaunge,
In every shap homely and straunge, 6320
Cowde nevere sich gilé ne tresouné
As I. For I come never in toune,
Thére as I myght knowen be ;

Though men me bothe myght here and see,
Full wel I can my clothis chaunge,
Take oon and make another straunge.
Now am I knyght, now chastélcyne,
Now prelat, and now chapelcyne,
Now prest, now clerk, and now forstere ;
Now am I maister, now scolere, 6330
Now monke, now chanoun, now bailly ;

What ever myster man am I,
Now am I prince, now am I page,
And kan by herte every langage ;
Sofme tyme am I hore and olde,
Now am I yonge, [and] stoute, and holde ;
Now am I Robert, now Robyn,
Now Frere Menour, now Iacobyn.

And with me folwith my lobeby,
To done me solas and company, 6340
That hight Dame Abstinencé-Streyned.

In many a queynte array feyned,
Ryght as it cometh to hir lykyng,
I fulfille al hir desiryng ;

Sómtyme a wommans cloth take I,
Now am I maydc, now lady ;

Sómtyme I am religious,
Now lyk an anker in an hous ;

Sómtyme am I Prioressé,
And now a nonne, and now Abbessé ; 6350
And go thurgh allé regiouns,

6314. *shal* often thus makes an extra unaccented syllable.

6317, 6318. Supplied by Kaluza from Fr. MSS. have *aperceyvyng* for *deceyvyng* in 6317, and G leaves blank space for 6318, which appears in Th. as *That al to late cometh knowyng*.

6337. *Robert*, i.e. gentleman.

6337. *Robyn*, i.e. clown.

6338. *Frere Menour*, i.e. Franciscan.

6338. *Iacobyn*, i.e. Dominican.

6341. MSS. *and reyned* for *streyned*.

6344. *To fulfille*, with comma after *streyned* and full stop after *desiryng*, would better translate Fr.

6346. MSS. *a mayde*.

Sekyng all religiouns.
 But to what ordre that I am sworne,
 I take the strawe, and lete the corne
 To joly folk I enhabite;
 I axe nomore but her abite.
 What wole ye more? In every wise,
 Right as me lyst, I ine disgyse;
 Wel can I wre me undir wede,
 Unlyk is my word to my dede. 6360
 [I] make into my trappis falle,
 Thurgh my pryveleges, alle
 That ben in Cristendome alyve,
 I may assoile and I may shryve
 (That no prelat may letté me)
 All folk where evere thei foundé be;
 I note no prelate may done so,
 But it the pope be, and no mo,
 That madé thilk establisshing. 6370
 Now is not this a propre thing?
 But where my sleight is aperceyved,
 Of hem I am nomore resceyved,
 As I was wont; and wostow why?
 For I dide hem a tregetrie.
 But therof yeve I lytel tale;
 I have the silver and the male.
 So have I prechid, and eke shriven,
 So have I take, so have me given
 Thurgh her foly husbonde and wyf,
 That I lede right a joly lyf, 6380
 Thurgh symplesse of the prelacye;
 They knowe not al my tregettrie.
 But for asmoche as man and wyf
 Shulde shewe her paroch-prest her lyf
 Onys a yeer, as seith the book,

6354. *lete*, MSS. *lete*; cp. 5544, 5050, 6006.
 6355. The Fr. texts vary here. The verse should run: *To blynde folk ther I enhabit*, and be taken with v. 6356. *Joly* is perhaps a mistake for *sely*, translating 'por gens avugler' misread as 'por gens avugles.'

6359. *were*, MSS. *were*; Skeat and Kaluza *here*; *Moult sont en moi mué li vers*.

6365. *That*, 'cc.'

6371. *where*, MSS. *were*.

6371. *sleight is*, MSS. *sleightis*. Other editions retain reading of MSS. See next note.

6372. Missing from MSS.; here supplied from Fr.:

Mes mes traiv ont q' il eus
 Si n'en sui mes si t'ous

Bell: I shulde ne lenger ben received.

Morris: Ne shulde I more ben receyved.

But the statement in Fr. is not conditional.

6375. MSS. *a litel tale*; cp. v. 6346.

Er ony wight his housel took,
 Thanne have I pryvylegis large
 That may of myché thing discharge.
 For he may seie right thus, parde:—
 "Sir Preest, in shrift I telle it thee, 6390
 That he to whom that I am shryven
 Hath me assoiléd, and me given
 For penaunce sothly for my synne
 Which that I fonde me gilty ynne;
 Ne I ne have nevere entencioun,
 To maké double confessioun,
 Ne reherecste my shrift to thee;
 O shrift is right ynough to me.
 This oughté thee sufficé wele,
 Ne be not rebel never a dele, 6400
 For certis, though thou haddist it sworn,
 I wote no prest ne prelat borne
 That may to shrift este me constreyne.
 And if they done, I wole me pleyne,
 For I wote where to pleyne wele.
 Thou shalt not streyné me a dele
 Ne enforcé me, ne not me trouble
 To maké my confessioun double.
 Ne I have none asleccioun, 6410
 To have double absolucioun.
 The firste is right ynough to me,
 This latter assoilyng quyte I thee.
 I am unbounde—What! Maist thoufynde
 More of my synnes me to unbynde!
 For he that myght hath in his honde
 Of all my synnés me unbonde,
 And if thou wolt me thus constreyne
 That me mote nedis on thee pleyne,
 There shall no juggle imperial
 Ne bisshop, ne official, 6420
 Done jugement on me; for I
 Shal gone and pleyne me openly
 Unto my shriftfadir newe,
 That highté not Frere Wolf untrewé!
 And he shal chevys hym for me,
 For I trowe he can hampre thee.
 But lord! he wolde be wrooth withall,
 If men hym woldé Frere Wolf call;
 For he wolde have no pacience,
 But done al cruel vengeance; 6430
 He wolde his myght done at the leest
 No thing spare, for goddis heest.
 And god so wys be my socour,
 But thou yeve me my Savyour
 At Ester, whanne it likith me,

Withouté presyng more on thee,
 I wole forth and to hym gone,
 And he shal housel me anon,
 For I am out of thi grucching;
 I kepe not dele with thee no thing." 6440
 Thus may he shryve hym that forsaketh
 His paroch prest, and to me takith;
 And if the prest wole hym refuse,
 I am full redy hym to accuse,
 And hym punysshē and hampre so
 That he his chirchē shal forgo.
 But who so hath in his felyng
 The consequence of such shryvyng,
 Shal sene that prest may never have myght
 To knowe the conscience a-right 6450
 Of hym that is undir his cure.
 And this ageyns Holy Scripture,
 That biddith every heerde honeste
 Have very knowing of his beeste.
 But porē folk that gone by strete,
 That have no gold, ne sommēs grete,
 Hem wolde I lete to her prelates;
 Or lete her prestis knowe her states.
 Forto me right nought yevē they.
 'And why?'

'It is for they ne may.

They ben so bare I take no kepe, 6461
 But I wole have the fattē sheepe;
 Lat parish prestis have the lene,
 I yeve not of her harme a bene,
 And if that prelates grucché it,
 That oughten wroth be in her witt
 To leese her fattē beestes so,
 I shal yeve hem a stroke or two
 That they shal leesen with [her] force
 Yē bothe her mytre and her croce. 6470
 Thus jape I hem, and have do longe,
 My pryveleges ben so stronge.'

Fals - Semblaunt wolde have stynted
 heere,

But Love ne made hym no such cheere
 That he was wery of his sawe,
 But forto make hym glad and fawe

6436. *presyng*, pressing.

6440. *i.e.* I don't care to deal with you in any way.

6452. *this*, this is.

6466. MSS. *woth*.

6469. *her*, Skeat *the*, Kaluza suggests *by scint loce*, referring to *Tales*, D 483. Fr.:

Que lever feral tex bokes
 Qu'il en perdront mitres et croces.

He seide: 'Telle on more specially,
 How that thou servest untrewly;
 Telle forth, and shame thee never a dele,
 For as thyn abit shewith wle 6480
 Thou semest an hooly heremyte.'
 'Sothe is, but I am an ypocrite.'
 'Thou goste and prechest poverte.'
 'Ye sir but richesse hath pouste.'
 'Thou prechest abstinence also.'
 'Sir, I wole fillen, so mote I go,
 My paunchē of good mete and [good]

wyne,

As shulde a maister of dyvyne;
 For how that I me pover feyne,
 Yit all[ē] pore folk I disdeyne. 6490
 I Lovē bettir thacqueyntaunce
 Ten tymē of the Kyng of Fraunce,
 Than of a pore man of mylde mode,
 Though that his soule be also gode.
 For whanne I see beggers quakyng
 Naked on myxnes al stynkyng
 For hungre crie, and eke for care,
 I entremete not of her fare.
 They ben so pore and ful of pyne, 6499
 They myght not oonyes yeve me a dyne,
 For they have no thing but her lyf
 What shulde he yeve that likketh his
 knyff?

It is but foly to entremete,
 To seke in houndēs nest fat mete.
 Lete bere hem to the spitel anon,
 But for me comfort gete they noon.

Būt a richē sike usurere

Wolde I visite and dawē nere;
 Hym wole I comforte and rehetē,
 For I hope of his gold to gete. 6510
 And if that wikkid deth hym have,
 I wole go with hym to his grave;
 And if ther ony reprove me
 Why that I lete the pore be,
 Wōstow how I mot a-scape?

6481. *semest*, MSS. *servest*.

6482. *an*, MSS. *but an*.

6492. *Ten tyne*, Fr. 'cent mil tans.'

6493. Skeat omits *a*. Kaluza *mylde*, which seems better; cp. Fr. 'Que d'un povere par nostre Dame'; *pover*, too, is more frequent than *pore* in the poem.

6500. Kaluza and Skeat omit *a*.

6507. *usurere* seems to be dissyllabic here, like *secular* in v. 6263.

6515. *not*, MSS. *not*.

I sey and swerè hym ful rape
 That richè men han morè tecches,
 Of synnè than han porè wrecches,
 And han of counsel more mister,
 And therefore I wole drawe hem ner.
 But as grete hurt, it may so be, 6521
 I hath soule in right grete povertè
 As soule in grete richesse, forsothe,
 Al be it that they hurten bothe ;
 For richesse and mendicitees
 Ben clepid ii. extremytees ;
 The mene is clepèd suffisaunce,
 Ther lyth of vertu the abondaunce.
 For Salamon, full wel I wote,
 In his Parablis us wote, 6530
 As it is knowe to many a wight,
 In his thrittene chapitre right :
 " God thou me kepe, for thi pouste,
 Fro richesse and mendicite ;
 For if a richè man hym dresse,
 To thanke to myche on [his] richesse,
 His herte on that so fer is sett,
 That he his creâtour foryett ;
 And hym that begging wole ay greve,
 How shulde I bi his word hym leve ?
 Unnethe [is] that he nys a mycher 6541
 Forsworne or ellis God is lyer."
 Thus seith Salamoness sawes.
 Ne we fynde writen in no lawis
 And namely in oure Cristen lay
 (Whoso seith, "Ye," I dar sey, "Nay,")
 That Crist ne his apostlis dere,
 While that they walkide in erthè heere,
 Were never seen her bred beggyng ;
 For they nolde beggen for no thing. 6550
 And right thus was men wont to teche,
 And in this wisè wolde it preche
 The maistres of divinite
 Somtyme in Parys the citee.
 And if men wolde ther-gyn appose
 The nakid text and lete the glose,
 It myghte soone assoiled be.

6522. MSS. *a soule*.6532. *thrittene*, it should be thirtieth (Prov. xxx. 8, 9), 'trentiesme.'6536. *his richesse*, 'sa richesse.'6539. *begging*, MSS. *beggith* (corrected by Kaluza).6539. *wole greve*, 'mendicite guerroie.'6542. *God is*, MSS. *goddis*. Cp. 6541.6543. *Salamoness*, MSS. *Salamon* (Kaluza).6551. *men*, one.

For men may wel the sothè see,
 That, parde, they myght aske a thing
 Pléynly forth without begging ; 6560
 For they were Goddis herdis deere,
 And cure of soulès hadden heere.
 They noldè no thing begge her fode ;
 For aftir Crist was done on rode
 With ther propre hondis they wrought,
 And with travel, and ellis nought,
 They wonnen all her sustenaunce,
 And lyveden forth in her penaunce,
 And the remenaunt yaf away
 To other porè folkis alwey. 6570
 They neither bidden tour ne halle,
 But ley in houses smale with-alle.
 A myghty man that can and may,
 Shulde with his honde and body alway,
 Wynne hym his fode in laboring,
 If he ne have rent or sich a thing,
 Al though he be religious,
 And god to serven curious.
 Thus mote he done, or do trespas,
 But if it be in certeyn cas, 6580
 That I can reherce if myster be
 Right wel, whanne the tyme I se.
 Seke the book of seynt Austyne,
 Be it in papir or perchemyne,
 There as he writ of these worchynges ;
 Thou shalt seen that noon excusynges
 A pafit man ne shuldè seke
 Bi wordis, ne bi dedis eke,
 Al though he be religious
 And god to serven curious, 6590
 That he ne shal, so mote I go,
 With propre hondis and body also,
 Gête his fode in laboryng,
 If he ne have proprete of thing.
 Vit shulde he selle all his substaunce
 And with his swynk have sustenaunce,
 If he be parfit in bounte ;
 Thus han tho bookès toldè me.
 For he that wole gone ydilly
 And usith it ay besily 6600
 To haunten other mennès table,
 He is a trechour ful of fable,

6563. *penaunce*, 'en patience, so perhaps, as Kaluza suggests, read *pacience*.6581. Perhaps omit *That*.6592. Kaluza reads *houde*, citing v. 6574 ; but cp. v. 6565.6600. *besily*, MSS. *desily*.

Ne he ne may by gode resoun
 Excuse hym by his orisoun ;
 For men bihoveth in somme gise
 Blynne somtyme in Goddis servise
 To gone and purchasen her nede.
 Men mote eten, that is no drede,
 And slepe, and eke do other thing ;
 So longc may they leve praiyng ; 6610
 So may they eke her praier blyne,
 While that they werke her mete to wynne.
 Seynt Austyn wole therto accorde
 In thilkc book that I recorde.
 Justinian eke, that madc lawes,
 Hath thus forboden, by old dawes.
 No man up peync to be dede,
 Mighty of body, to begge his brede,
 If he may swynke it forto gete ;
 Men shulde hym rather mayne or bete,
 Or done of hym aperte justice, 6621
 Than suffren hym in such malice.
 They done not wel, so mote I go,
 That taken such almessc so,
 But if they have somme pryvelege,
 That of the peyne hem wole allege.
 But how that is, can I not see,
 But if the prince disseyved be.
 Ne I ne wene not sikerly
 That they may have it rightfully. 6630
 But I wole not determine
 Of prynces power, ne defyne,
 Ne by my word comprede, I-wys,
 If it so ferre may strecche in this ;
 I wole not entremete a dele.
 But I trowe that the book seith wele,
 Who that takith almessis that be
 Déwe to folk, that men may se
 Lámé, fuble, wery and bare,
 Póre or in such maner care, 6640
 That konné wynne hem never mo,
 For they have no power therto,
 He etith his ownc dampnyng,
 But if he lye that made al thing.
 And if ye such a truaunt fynde,
 Chastise hym wel, if ye be kynde.
 But they wolde haté you percas,
 And if ye fillen in her laas,

6606. *Blynne*, MSS. *Ben*. Skeat and Kaluza read *somtyme leven*.

6615. *Justinian*, cod. Justin. xi. 25. *De mendicantibus validis* (Bell).

They wolde eftsoonys do you scathe,
 If that they myghtc, late or rathe. 6650
 For they be not full pacient,
 That han the world thus foulc blent.
 And witeth wel, that [though] God bad
 The good-man selle al that he had,
 And folowe hym, and to pore it yive,
 He wolde not thfore that he lyve
 To serven hym in mendience,
 For it was nevere his sentence.
 But he bad wirken whanne that neede is,
 And folwe hym in goodc dedis. 6660
 Seynt Poule, that loved al Hooly Chirche,
 He bade 'happostles forto wirche,
 And wynnen her lyfode in that wise,
 And hem defended truaundise ;
 And seide, "Wirketh with youre honden" ;
 Thus shulde the thing be undirstonden.
 He nolde, I-wys, have bidde hem begging,
 Ne sellen gospel ne prechyng,
 Lest they berafte, with her askyng,
 Folk of her catel or of her thing. 6670
 For in this world is many a man
 That yeveth his good for he ne can
 Werne it for shame, or ellis he
 Wolde of the asker delyvered be ;
 And for he hym encombrith so,
 He yeveth hym good to late hym go.
 But it can hem no thyng profit
 They lese the yift and the meryte.
 The goodc folk that Poule to preched
 Profred hym ofté, whan he hem teched,
 Somme of her good in charite. 6681
 But thfore right no thing toke he,
 But of his hondwerk wolde he gete
 Clothes to wryne hym, and his mete.'
 'Telle me thanne how a man may lyven,
 That al his good to pore hath yiven,
 And wole but oonly bidde his bedis,
 And nevere with hondes labour his nede is.
 May he do so ?'

'Ye sir.'

'And how ?'

6653. *though*, supplied by Kaluza ; but *ther* (= where) would come closer to Fr. 'la au Diex comande.'

6654. *The good-man*, Fr. 'prodons.'

6677. *hem*, MSS. *lym*, Fr. 'lor prouffite.'

6688. Found only in Thynne, but according nearly enough with Fr. *nede is*, Th. *nedis* ; *labour* in sense of 'to labour for' is not otherwise known in M.E.

Sir, I wole gladly tellé yow. 6690
 Seynt Austyn seith a man may be
 In houses that han proprete,
 As Templers, and Hospiteler,
 And as these Chanouns Regulers,
 Or Whitè monkés or these Blake—
 I wole no mo ensamplis make—
 And take therof his sustenyng,
 For therynne lyth no beggryng;
 But other wey[ç]s not, y-wys,
 Yif Austyn gabboth not of this. 6700
 And yit full many a monke laboreth,
 That God in hooly chirche honoureth;
 For whanne her swynkyng is agone,
 They rede and syng in chirche anone.
 And for ther hath ben gret discorde,
 As many a wight may bere recorde,
 Upon the estate of mendience,
 I wole shortly, in youre presence,
 Telle how a man may begge at nede,
 That hath not wherwith hym to fede.
 Maugre this felones jangelyngis, 6711
 For sothfastnesse wole none hidyngis;
 And yit percas I may abey,
 That I to yow sothly this sey.
 Lo heere the caas especial:
 If a man be so bestial,
 That he of no craft hath science,
 And nought desireth ignorence,
 Thanne may he go a-begging yerne,
 Til he somme maner crafte kan lerne;
 Thurgh which withoute truaundyng 6721
 He may in trouthe have his lyvyng.
 Or if he may dore no labour
 For elde, or sykenesse, or langour,
 Or for his tendre age also,
 Thanne may he yit a-begging go.
 Or if he have peraventure,
 Thurgh usage of his norriture,
 Lyved over deliciously,
 Thanne oughten good folk comunly 6730
 Han of his myscheef somme pitce,
 And suffren hym also that he
 May gone aboute and begge his breed,
 That he be not for hungur deed.
 Or if he have of craft kunnyng,

And strengthe also, and desiryng
 To wirken as he had what
 But he fynde neithir this ne that,
 Thanne may he beggè, til that he
 Have geten his necessite. 6740
 Or if his wynnyng be so lite
 That his labour wole not acquyte
 Sufficiently al his lyvyng,
 Yit may he go his breed beggryng;
 Fro dore to dore he may go trace,
 Til he the remenaunt may purchase.
 Or if a man wolde undirtake
 Ony emprisè forto make
 In the rescous of oure lay,
 And it defenden as he may, 6750
 Be it with armés or lettrure
 Or other covenable cure,
 If it be so he pore be,
 Thanne may he beggè til that he
 May fynde in trouthe forto swynke,
 And gete hym clothe, mete and drynke,
 Swynke he with hondis corporell
 And not with hondis espirituell.
 In al this caas and in semblables,
 If that ther ben mo resonables, 6760
 He may begge as I telle you heere,
 And ellis nought in no manere;
 As William Seynt Amour wolde preche,
 And ofté wolde dispute and teche,
 Of this mater all openly
 At Parys full solempnly.
 And, also god my soulé blesse,
 As he had in this stedfastnesse
 The accorde of the universite
 And of the puple, as semeth me, 6770
 No good man oughte it to refuse,
 Ne ought hym therof to excuse.
 Be wrothe or blithè who-so be,
 For I wole speke and telle it thee,
 Al shulde I dye, and be putt down
 As was seynt Poule in derke prisoun,
 Or be exiled in this caas
 With wrong, as maister William was,
 That my moder, Ypocrysie,
 Bánysshéd for hir gret envye. 6780

6700. *I'if*, MSS. *I'it*, 'Se.'6707. MSS. *mendience*.6711. MSS. *his felones*, Fr. 'Maugre les felon-
esses jangles,' *i.e.* these felonous janglings.6749. *i.e.* in the defence of our religion.6759. *th'is*, plural.6763. William Seynt Amour, a doctor of the
Sorbonne who wrote a book against friars in
the 13th century.6769. *Th'accord of th'universite*.

My modir flemed hym, Seynt Amour :
 The noble didé such labour
 To susteyne evere the loyale,
 That he to moche agilté me ;
 He made a book, and lete it write
 Wheryn hys lyfe he dyd al write,
 And wolde ich reneyed begging,
 And lyvèd by my traveylyng,
 If I ne had rent ne other goode.
 What ! Wenéd he that I were woode ? 6790
 For labour myght me never plesé,
 I have more wille to bene at ese,
 And have wel lever, soth to sey,
 Bifore the puple patre and prey ;
 And wrie me in my foxerie
 Under a cope of papelardie.
 Quod Love, 'What devel is this that I heere ?
 What wordis tellest thou me heere ?'
 'What, Sir ?'

'Falsnesse that apert is ;
 Thanne dredist thou not god ?'

'No certis ;
 For selde in grete thing shal he spede
 In this worldé, that god wole drede. 6802
 For folk that hem to vertu yvven,
 And truly on her owné lyven,
 And hem in goodnesse ay contene,
 On hem is lytel thrift y-sene.
 Sùch folk drinken gret mysese ;
 Thát lyf may me never plesé.
 But se what gold han usurers
 And silver eke in [her] garners, 6810
 Taylagiers and these monyours,
 Bailifs, bedels, provost countours
 These lyven wel nygh by ravyne.
 The smalé puple hem mote enclyne,
 And they as wolvès wole hem eten.
 Upon the poré folk they geten
 Full moche of that they spende or kepe.
 Nis none of hem that he nyl strepe,
 And wrine hem silf wel atté fulle ;
 Withouté scaldyng they hem pulle. 6820
 The stronge the féble overgoth,
 But I, that were my symple cloth,

6786. As in Th. and Fr. ; G in late hand,
Of thyngis that he beste myghte.

6802. MSS. *world*, but as in v. 6843 the metre
 requires two syllables.

6810. MSS. omit *her*, 'lor greniers.'

6819. *wrine*, (?) *wrecen*. The scribe frequently
 confuses *i* and *e*.

Robbe bothé robbéd and robbours,
 And gilé giléd and gilours.
 By my tregret, I gadre and threste
 The gret tresour into my cheste,
 That lyth with me so fasté bounde.
 Myn highé paleys do I founde,
 And my delitès I fulfille
 With wyne at feestès at my wille 6830
 And tables full of entremees.
 I wole no lyf but ese and pees,
 And wynné gold to spende also.
 For whanne the greté lagge is go,
 It cometh right with my japes.
 Make I not wel tumbler myn apes ?
 To wynnen is alwey myn entent,
 My purchace is bettir than my rent ;
 For though I shuldé beten be,
 Over-al I entremeté me ; 6840
 Withouté me may no wight dure.
 I walké soulés forto cure,
 Of al the worldé cure have I
 In brede and lengthé. Bold[é]ly
 I wole bothe preche and eke counceilen ;
 With hendis wille I not travelen,
 For of the Pope I have the bull,
 I ne holde not my wittés dull.
 I wole not stynten in my lyve
 These emperouris forto shryve, 6850
 Or kyngis, dukis, lordis grete ;
 But poré folk al quyte I lete,
 I love no such shryvyng, parde ;
 But it for other causé be,
 I rekké not of poré men—
 Her astate is not worth an hen ;
 Where fyndest thou a swynker of labour
 Have me unto his confessour ?
 But emperesses and duchesses,
 Thise queenes, and eke countesses, 6860
 Thise abbessis, and eke bygyns,
 These greté ladyes palasyns,
 These joly knyghtis and baillyves,
 These nonnes, and thise burgeis wyves
 That riché ben and eke plesyng,
 And thise maidens wellfaryng,
 Wher so they clad or naked be,
 Uncounceiled goth ther noon fro me.

6827, 6829. MSS. *robbyng*, *giling*.

6838. Cp. *Vaics*, D 145.

6850. MSS. *emperours*.

6862. *ladyes palasyns*, i.e. court ladies.

And for her soulés savete
At lord and lady and her meyne 6870
I axe, whanne thei hem to me shryve,
The proprete of al her lyve,
And make hem trowe, bothe meest and
lecest,

Hir parochi prest nys but a beest
Ayens me and my companye,
That shrewis ben as gret as I.
Fro whiche I wole not hide in holde

No pryvete that me is tolde,
That I, by word or signe y-wis,
[Nyl] make hem knowé what it is. 6880

And they wolen also tellen me,
They hele fro me no pryvyte,
And forto make yow hem perceyven,
That usen folk thus to disceyven,
I wole you seyn withouten drede
What men may in the gospel rede
Of seynt Mathew, the gospelere,
That seith as I shal you sey heere :

“ Uppon the chaire of Moyses
(Thus is it gloséd doutéles : 6890

That is the Oldé Testament,
For ther-by is the chaire ment)
Sütte Scribes and Pharisen
(That is to seyn, the cursid men
Whiche that we ypocritis calle).
Doth that they preche, I rede you alle,
But doth not as they don a dele ;
That ben not wery to seye wele,
But to do wel no will have they.

And they wolde bynde on folk al-wey, 6900
Thát ben to be giled able,
Búrdons that ben importable.

On folkés shuldris thinges they couchen,
That they nyl with her fyngris touchen.”

‘ And why wole they not touche it ? ’

‘ Why,

For hem ne lyst not sikirly,
For saddé burdons that men taken,
Make folkes shuldris aken.

And if they do ought that good be,
That is for folk it shuldé se. 6910

Iier bordurs larger maken they,
And make her hemmes wide alwey,
And loven setés at the table,

The firste and mosté honourable,
And forto han the firste chaieris
In synagogis to hem full deere is,
And willen that folk hem loute and grete,
Whanne that they passen thurgh the strete,
And wolen be cleped “ Maister ” also.
But they ne shulde not willen so, 6920
The gospel is ther-ageyns, I gesse,
That shewith wel her wikkidnesse.

Another custome usé we
Of hem that wole ayens us be ;
We hate hym deedly everichone,
And we wole wercy hym as oon ;
Hym that oon hatith hate we alle,
And congecte how to done hym falle.

And if we seen hym wyne honour,
Richesse, or preis, thurgh his valour, 6930
Provendé, rent, or dignyte,

Ful fast y-wys compassen we
Bi what ladder he is clomben so ;
And forto maken hym doun to go
With traisoun we wole hym defame,
And done hym leese his goodé name.

Thus from his ladder we hym take,
And thus his freendis foes we make.
But word ne wité shal he noon,
Till all hise freendis ben his soon. 6940
For if we dide it openly

We myght have blamé redily ;
For hadde he wist of oure malice,
He hadde hym kept, but he were nyce.

Another is this, that if so falle
That ther be oon amonge us alle
That doth a good turne out of drede,
We seyn it is oure alder deede.

Ye sikerly though he it feyned,
Or that hym list, or that hym deyned 6950
A man thurgh hym avauncéd be,

Therof all parseners be we,
And tellen folk where so we go,
That man thurgh us is sprongen so.

And forto have of men preysyng,
We purchace thurgh oure flateryng
Of riché men of gret pouste
Lettres to witnessse oure bounte,
So that man weneth that may us see
That allé vertu in us be. 6960

And al-wey poré we us feyne ;

6880. *Nyl*, MSS. *Wole*.

6887. Matt. xxiii. 1-8.

6911. MSS. *burdons*, ‘philateres.’

6926. *as oon*, ‘par accord.’ ? *at oon*.

6950. *hym deyned*, he vouchsafed.

But how so that we begge or pleyne,
 We ben the folk without lesyng
 That all thing have without havyng.
 Thus be we dred of the puple y-wis.
 And gladly my purpos is this :
 I delé with no wight but he
 Have gold and tresour gret plente ;
 Her acqueyntauncé wel love I,
 This is moche my desire shortly. 6970
 I entremete me of brokages,
 I maké pees and mariages,
 I am gladly executour,
 And many tymes procuratour ;
 I am somtyme messenger
 (That fallith not to my myster),
 And many tymes I make enquestes—
 For me that office not honest is.
 To dele with other mennes thing,
 That is to me a gret lykyng. 6980
 And if that ye have ought to do
 In place that I reperié to,
 I shal it speden thurgh my witt,
 As soone as ye have told me it.
 So that ye servé me to pay,
 My servyse shal be youre alway ;
 But who-so wole chastisé me,
 Anoon my lové lost hath he.
 For I love no man in no gise
 That wole me repreve or chastise ; 6990
 But I wolde al folk undirtake,
 And of no wight no teching take ;
 For I that other folk chastie,
 Wole not be taught fro my folie.
 I love noon hermitagé more ;
 All desertés, and holtés hore,
 And greté wodés everichon,
 I lete hem to the Baptist Iohn.
 I quethe hym quyte, and hym relese
 Of Egipt all the wildirnesse. 7000
 To ferre were alle my mansiouns
 Fro al citees and goodé tounes ;
 My paleis and myn hous make I
 There men may renne ynne openly ;
 And sey that I the world forsake,
 But al amydde I bilde and mak

6970. 'Ce sont auques tuit mi desir.'

6974. MSS. *a procuratour*. We have seen that the scribe frequently inserts *a* in such cases.

6998. *i.e.* the reputed founder of asceticism.

7002. G omits *al*.

My hous, and swimme and pley therynne,
 Bet than a fish doth with his fynne.
 Of Antecristes men am I,
 Of whiche that Crist seith openly, 7010
 They have abit of hoolynesse,
 And lyven in such wikkednesse.
 Outward lambren semen we,
 Full of goodnesse and of pitee,
 And inward we withouten fable
 Ben gredy wolvés ravysable.
 We enviroune bothe londe and se,
 With all the worldé werrien we ;
 We wole ordeyne of allé thing,
 Of folkis good and her lyvyng. 7020
 If ther be castel or citee
 Wherynne that ony bourgerons be,
 Al though that they of Milayne were
 (For therof ben they blaméd there) ;
 Or if a wight out of mesure
 Wolde lene his gold and take usure,
 For that he is so covetous ;
 Or if he be to lecherous,
 Or these that haunté symonye,
 Or provost full of trecherie, 7030
 Or prelat lyvyng jolily,
 Or prest that halt his quene hym by,
 Or oldé horis hostilers,
 Or other bawdes or bordillers,
 Or ellés blamed of ony vice
 Of whiche men shulden done justice :
 Bi all the seyntés that me pray,
 But they defende them with lamprey,
 With luce, with elys, with samons,
 With tendre gees, and with capons, 7040
 With tartés, or with chesis fat,
 With deynté flawns brode and flat,
 With caleweis, or with pullaylle,
 With conynges, or with fyne vitaille,
 That we undir our clothés wide
 Maken thorough oure golet glide,
 Or but he wole do come in haste
 Roo-venysoun bake in paste,
 Whether so that he loure or groyne,

7007. *swimme*, G *swumme* ; cp. *Tales*, D 1926.
 7021 ff. The conclusion to these conditions
 is found in v. 7049 ff.

7022. *bourgerons* (G *begger*), 'hogre,' sodom-
 ites.

7029. Skeat reads *these* or *for these that*,
 following 'lerres ou' ; but this may have been
 misread (?) 'lesses au,' etc.

7041. MSS. *cheffis*.

He shal have of a corde a loigne 7050
With whiche men shal hym bynde and
lede

To brenne hym for his synful deede,
That men shull here hym crie and rore,
A myl-vey aboute and more ;
Or ellis he shal in prisoun dye,
But if he wole his frendship bye,
Or smerten that that he hath do
More than his gilt amounteth to
But and he couthe thurgh his sleight
Do maken up a tour of height,— 7060
Nought rought I whethir of stone, or tree,
Or erthe or turvs though it be,
Though it were of no vounde stone
Wrought with squyre and scantilone,
So that the tour were stuffed well
With allé richesse temporell—
And thanne that he wolde updresse
Engyns bothé more and lesse,
To cast at us by every side
To bere his goodé namé wide, 7070
Such flightes [as] I shal yow nevene,
Barells of wyne by sixe or sevene
Or gold in sakkis gret plente,
He shuldé soone delyvered be.
And if he have noon sich pitaunces,
Late hym study in equipolences,
And laté lyes and fallaces,
If that he wolde deserve oure graces ;
Or we shal bere hym such witnesse
Of synne and of his wrecchidnesse, 7080
And done his loos so widé renne,
That al quyk we shulden hym brenne,
Or ellis yeve hym suche penaunce
That is wel wors than the pitaunce.
For thou shalt never for no thing
Kon knownen a-right by her clothing
The traitours full of trecherie,
But thou her werkis kan a-spie.
And ne hadde the good kepyng be
Whilom of the universite 7090
That kepith the key of Cristendome
We had bene turmented, al and some.

7056. *his frendship bye*, i.e. pay for his relief ;
Skeat changes *his* to *our*.

7057. *that that*, (?) *for that*.

7063. *vounde*, Skeat reads *founde*; Fr. 'de quel pierre.' Cole's *Dictionary* glosses *vund* *stone*, 'free-stone,' with query 'found or foundation.'

7092. As in Th.; G *Of al that here axe juste their dome*, in late hand over blank space.

Suche ben the stynkyng prophetis ;
Nys none of hem that good prophete is,
For they thurgh wikked entencioun,
The yeer of the Incarnacioun
A thousand and two hundred yeer,
Fyve and fifty, ferther ne ner,
Broughten a book with sory grace
To yeven ensample in comune place, 7100
That seidé thus though it were fable :
"This is the Gospel Perdurable,
That fro the Holy Goost is sent."—
Wel were it worthi to bene brent !
Entitled was in such manere
This book, of which I tellé heere
Ther nas no wight in all Parys
Biforne Oure Lady at parvys
That he ne mighté bye the book
To copy, if hym talent toke. 7110
There myght he se by gret tresoun
Full many fals comparisoun :—
"As moche as thurgh his greté myght,
Be it of heté or of lyght,
The sonnè sourmounteth the mone,
That troublé is and chaungith soone,
And the noté kernell the shell—
(I scorné not, that I yow tell)—
Right so, withouten ony gile,
Sourmounteth this noble Evangile 7120
The word of ony evangelist."
And to her title they token Crist.
And many such comparisoun
Of which I make no mencion,
Mighté men in that book fynde
Who so coude of hem have mynde.

The Universite, that tho was a-slepe,
Gan forto braide and taken kepe,
And at the noys the heed upcast,
Ne never sithen slept it fast ; 7130
But up it stert, and armés toke

7098. *ferther ne ner* (G *ferther neuer*), 'n'est
hons vivans qui m'en demente,' i.e. neither
earlier nor later.

7099. *a book*, the *Evangelium Eternum* ;
Skeat refers to Southey's *Book of the Church*,
ch. xi.

7104. MSS. *worth*.

7109. G omits : Th. *That they ne mighte the
booke by*.

7110. Th. inserts before 7110 *The sentence
pleased hem well truly*, and adds after it,
Of the Evangelistes book. Fr. contains only
G's single line.

7115. G (*same for sonne*).

7116. MSS. *troubleure*. 'trouble.'

Ayens this false horrible boke,
 Al redy bateil for to make,
 And to the juge the book to take.
 But they that broughten the boke there
 Hent it anon away for fere ;
 They noldê shewê more a dele
 But thenne it kept, and kepen will,
 Til such a tyme that they may see
 That they so strongê woxen be, 7140
 That no wyght may hem wel withstonde.
 For by that book they durst not stonde.
 Away they gonne it forto bere,
 For they ne durstê not answerê
 By exposicioun ne glose
 To that that clerkis wole appose
 Ayens the cursednesse y-wys
 Tliat in that bookê witen is.
 Now wote I not, ne I can not see
 What manereende that there shal be 7150
 Of al this [bokes] that they hyde ;
 But yit algate they shal abide
 Til that they may it bet defende,
 This trowe I best wole be her ende.
 Thus Antecrist abiden we,
 For we ben alle of his meyne ;
 And what man that wole not be so,
 Right soone he shal his lyf forgo.
 We wole a puple upon hym areyse,
 And thurgh oure gilê done hym seise,
 And hym on sharpê speris ryve, 7161
 Or other weyes brynge hym fro lyve.
 But if that he wole folowe y-wis
 That in oure booke witen is.
 Thus mych wole oure book signifie,
 That whilê Petre hath maistrie,
 May never Iohn shewe well his myght.
 Now have I you declarêd right
 The menyng of the hark and rynde,
 That makith the entenciouns blynde ; 7170
 But now at erst I wole bigynne,
 To expownê you the pith withynne :—

And the seculers comprehende,
 That Cristes lawê wole defende,
 And shulde it kepen and mayntenen
 Ayenês hem that all sustenen,

7151. MSS. omit *bokes*, 'cis livres.'

7172. One or two verses have been lost corresponding to 'Par Pierre voit le Pape entendre.'

7173. the *seculers*. (?) read *clerkes seculers*, 'clerics seculiers.'

And falsly to the puple techen.
 That Iohn bitokeneth hem that prechen
 That ther nys lawê covenable
 But thilkê Gospel Perdurable, 7180
 That fro the Holygost was sent
 To turnê folk that ben myswent.
 The strengthe of Iohn, they undirstonde
 The grace in whiche they seie they stonde,
 That doth the synfull folk converte
 And hem to Iesus Crist reverte.
 Full many another orriblite
 May men in that booke se,
 That ben comaundend doutêles
 Ayens the lawe of Rome expres ; 7190
 And all with Antecrist they holden,
 As men may in the book biholden.
 And thanne comaunden they to sleen
 Alle tho that with Petre been ;
 But they shal nevere have that myght,
 And God to-forne for strif to fight,
 That they ne shal enowê fynde,
 That Petres lawê shal have in mynde,
 And evere holde, and so mayntene ;
 That at the last it shal be sene 7200
 That they shal allê come therto
 For ought that they can speke or do.
 And thilkê lawê shal not stonde
 That they by Iohn have undirstonde,
 But, maugre hem, it shal adowne,
 And bene brought to confusioun.

But I wole stynt of this matere,
 For it is wonder longe to here.
 But hadde that ilkê book endured,
 Of better estate I were ensured ; 7210
 And freendis have I yit pardee
 That han me sett in gret degre.
 Of all this world is Emperour
 Gylê my fadir, the trechour,
 And Emperis my moder is,
 Maugre the Holygost y-wis.
 Oure myghty lynage and oure rowte
 Regneth in every regne aboute.
 And well is worthy we [maystres] be ;
 For all this world governê we, 7220
 And can the folk so wel disceyve,
 That noon oure gilê can perceyve ;
 And though they done, they dar not sey,

7178. *that*, MSS. *to*.

7197. *enowê*, MSS. *ynough*.

7219. *maistres*, MSS. *mynstres*.

The sothé dar no wight bywray.
 But he in Cristis wrath hym ledith
 That more than Crist my britheren dredith.
 He nys no full good champioun
 That dredith such similacioun,
 Nor that for peyné wole refusen
 Us to correcté and accusen. 7230
 He wole not entremete by right,
 Ne have God in his eyé-sight;
 And therefore God shal hym punyce.
 But me ne rekketh of no vice,
 Sithen men us loven comunably,
 And holden us for so worthy,
 That we may folk repreve echoon,
 And we nyl have repref of noon.
 Whom shulden folk worshipen so
 But us, that stynten never mo 7240
 To patren while that folk may us see,
 Though it not so bihynde hem be.
 And where is moré wode folyc
 Than to enhauncé chyvalrie,
 And lové noble men and gay,
 That joly clothis weren alway?
 If they be sich folk as they semen,
 So clene as men her clothis demen,
 And that her wordis folowe her dede,
 It is gret pité, out of drede, 7250
 For they wole be noon yprocritis!
 Of hem me thynketh [it] gret spite is;
 I can not love hem on no side.
 But beggers with these hodés wide,
 With sleigh and palé faces lene,
 And greyé clothis not full clene,
 But fretted full of tatarwaggés,
 And highé shoés knopped with dagges,
 That frouncen lyke a quailé-pipe,
 Or botis revelyng as a gype; 7260
 To such folk as I you dyvyse
 Shulde princes and these lordis wise
 Take all her londis and her thingis,
 Bothe werre and pees in governyngis;
 To such folk shulde a prince hym yive,
 That wolde his lyf in honour lyve.
 And if they be not as they seme,
 That serven thus the world to queme,
 There wolde I dwellé to disceyve
 The folk, for they shal not perceyve. 7270
 But I ne speke in no such wise

7268. *serven*, (?) *semen*; but 'emblem.'
 7270. G *To foi The*.

That men shulde humble abit dispise,
 So that no pride ther-undir be.
 No man shulde hate, as thynkith me,
 The poré man in sich clothying.
 But God ne preisith hym no thing
 That seith he hath the world forsake,
 And hath to worldly glorie hym take,
 And wole of siche delices use.
 Who may that begger wel excuse, 7280
 That papelard that hym yeldith so,
 And wole to worldly esé go,
 And seith that he the world hath lefte,
 And gredily it grypeth efte?
 He is the hounde, shame is to seyn,
 That to his castyng goth ageyn.
 But unto you dar I not lye;
 But myght I felen or aspie
 That ye perceyvéd it no thyng,
 Ye shuldé have a stark lesyng 7290
 Right in youre honde thus, to bigynne,
 I nolde it letté for no synne.'
 The god lough at the wondir tho,
 And every wight gan laugh also,
 And seide:—'Lo heere a man, a right
 Forto be trusty to every wight!'
 'Falssemblant,' quod Love, 'sey to
 me,

Sith I thus have advauncéd thee
 That in my court is thi dwellyng,
 And of ribawdis shalt be my kyng, 7300
 Wolt thou wel holden my forwardis?'
 'Yhe, sir, from hennes forewardis;
 Hadde never youre fadir heere biforne
 Servaunt so trewe, sith he was borne.'
 'That is ageynés all nature.'
 'Sir, putte you in that aventure;
 For though ye borowes take of me,
 The sikerer shal ye never be
 For ostages, ne sikirnesse, 7310
 Or chartres, forto bere witnessse
 I take youre silf to recorde heere,
 That men ne may, in no manere,
 Teren the wolf out of his hide,
 Til he be slayen bak and side,
 Though men hym bete and al defile.
 What! Wene ye that I wole bigile?
 For I am clothéd mekélý,
 Ther-undir is all my trechery;
 Myn herté chaungith never the mo

7314. *slayen*, MSS. *slawn*, 'escorchies.'

For noon abyt in which I go. 7320
 Though I have chere of symplenesse,
 I am not wery of shrewidnesse.
 Myn lemman Streyneth-Abstinence,
 Hath myster of my purveaunce;
 She hadde ful longe ago be dede,
 Nere my counceil and my rede;
 Lete hir allone and you and me.'

And Love answerde: 'I truste thee
 Withoute borowe for I wole noon.'

And Falssemblant, the thief, anon
 Ryght in that ilk samé place, 7331
 That haddé of tresoun al his face
 Ryght black withynne and white withoute,
 Thankyth hym, gan on his knees loute.

Thanne was thernought but 'Everyman
 Now to assaut that sailen can,'
 Quod Love, 'and that full hardly!'
 Thanne arméd they hem comunly
 Of sich armour as to hem felle. 7339
 Whanne the were arméd fers and felle,
 They wente hem forth all in a route,
 And set the castel al aboute.

They will nought away for no drede,
 Till it so be that they ben dede,
 Or till they have the castel take.
 And fouré batels they gan make,
 And parted hem in foure anon,
 And toke her way and forth they gone,
 The fouré gatés forto assaile,
 Of whiche the keepers wole not faile. 7350
 For they ben neithir sike ne dede,
 But hardy folk and stronge in dede.

Now wole I seyn the countynaunce
 Of Falssemblant and Abstynance,
 That ben to Wikkid-Tongé went.
 But first they heelde her parlement
 Whether it to doné were
 To maken hem be known there,
 Or elles walken forth disguised.
 But at the lasté they devysed 7360
 That they wolde gone in tapinage,
 As it were in a pilgrimage,
 Lyke good and hooly folk unfeyned.
 And Damé Abstynencé-Streyned
 Toke on a robe of kamelyne,
 And gan hir graithe as a Bygynne.
 A largé coverchief of threde
 She wrappéd all aboute hir heele;
 But she forgate not hir sawter;

A peire of bedis eke she bere 7370
 Upon a lace all of white threde,
 On which that she hir bedés bede.
 But she ne bought hem never a dele,
 For they were geven her I wote welc,
 God wote, of a full hooley frere,
 That seide he was hir fadir dere
 To whom she haddé after went
 Than ony frere of his covent.
 And he visited hir also,
 And many a sermoun seide hir to; 7380
 He noldé lette for man on lyve
 That he ne wolde hir ofté shryve,
 And with so great devocion
 They madé her confession,
 That they had ofté, for the nones,
 Two heedes in one hooode at ones.

Of fayre shappe I devyse her the,
 But pale of face somtyme was she;
 That falsé traytoursse untrewé,
 Was lyke that salowe horse of hewe, 7390
 That in the Apocalips is shewed,
 That signifiyeth tho folke beshrewed,
 That ben al ful of trecherye
 And palé through hypocryse.
 For on that horse no colour is,
 But onely deed and pale y-wis,
 Of suche a colour enlangoured
 Was Abstynence i-wys coloured;
 Of her estate she her repented,
 As her visagé represented. 7400

She had a burdowne al of Thefte,
 That Gyle had yve her of his yefte;
 And a skryppe of Faynte Distresse,
 That ful was of elengénese.
 And forthe she walkéd sobrelly;
 And False Semblant saynt *je vous die*,
 Had, as it were for suche mistere,
 Done on the copé of a frere.
 With cheré symple and ful pytous,
 Hys loking was not disdeynous 7410
 Ne proude, but meke and ful pesyble.

About his neck he bare a byble,
 And squierly forthé gan he gon;

7385-7376 are lost from G.

7387. Th. *devysed*.

7392. Th. *to*; cp. note to 7270.

7406. *saynt* is generally taken for *coint*, 'girdled'; but no such Eng. adj. is known. Fr. is 'qui bien se ratourne.' ? read *saynt*, i.e. pale.

7407. MSS. *And* for *Had*.

And, for to rest his lymmes upon,
 He had of Treson a potent ;
 As he were feble his way he went.
 But in his sleve he gan to thring
 A rasour sharpe, and wel bytyng,
 That was forgéd in a forge, 7417
 Whiche that men clepen Coupé-gorge.
 So longé forthé her waye they nomen,
 Tyl they to Wicked-Tongé comen.
 That at his gaté was syttyng,
 And sawe folke in the way passyng.
 The pilgrymes sawe he fasté by,
 That beren hem ful mekely,
 And humbly they with him mette,
 Dame Abstynence first him grette,
 And sythe him False-Semblant salued,
 And he hem ; but he not remeued, 7430
 For he ne dredde hem not a dele.
 For whan he sawe her faces wele,
 Alway in herté hem thought so,
 He shuldé knowe hem bothé two ;
 For wel he knewe Dame Abstynance,
 But he ne knewe not Constreynance.
 He knewe nat that she was constrayned,
 Ne of her thevès lyfe [y-]fayned,
 But wende she come of wyl al free ;
 But she come in another degree ; 7440
 And if of good wyl she beganne
 That wyl was fayléd her [as] thanne.
 And False-Semblant had he sayne also,
 But he knewe nat that he was false.
 Yet false was he, but his falsnesse
 Ne coude he nat espye nor gesse ;
 For Semblant was so slyé wrought,
 That Falsenesse he ne espyed nought.

But haddest thou knowen hym beforne
 Thou woldest on a boke have sworne, 7450
 Whan thou him saugh in thykke araye,
 That he that whilome was so gaye,
 And of the dauncé joly Robyn,
 Was tho become a Iacobyne.
 But sothely what so menne hym calle,
 Freres Prechours bene good menne alle,
 Her order wickedly they beren,
 Suche myn[ç]strelles if they weren.

So bene Augustyns and Cordyleres
 And Carmés, and eke Sackéd freeres 7460
 And allé frerés, shodde and bare,

7442. MSS. omit *as*.7459. *Augustyns*, read *Austins*.

(Though some of hem bengret and square)
 Ful hooly men, as I hem deme.
 Everyche of hem wolde good man seme ;
 But shalte thou never of apparence
 Séne conclude good consequence
 In none argument y-wis
 If existens al fayled is.
 For menne maye fynde alwaye sophyme
 The consequence to envenyme, 7470
 Who so that hath hadde the subtelte
 The double sentence for to se.

Whan the pilgrymes comen were
 To Wicked-Tonge that dwelled there,
 Her harneys nygh hem was algate ;
 By Wicked-Tonge adowne they sate,
 That badde hem nere him for to come
 And of tidyngs telle him some,
 And sayd hem : ' What case maketh you
 To come in-to this placé nowé ? ' 7480

' Sir,' sayd Straynéd-Abstynance,
 ' We, for to dryc our penaunce
 With hertés pytous and devoute
 Are comen, as pylgrimes gon aboute ;
 Wel nygh on fote alway we go ;
 Ful dousty ben our heeles two.
 And thus bothé we ben sent
 Throughout this worlde that is miswent,
 To yve ensample, and preche also.
 To fysshén synful menne we go, 7490
 For other fysshynge, ne fysshé we.
 And, sir, for that charyte,
 As we be wonte, herborowe we crave
 Your lyfe to amendé. Christ it save,
 And so it shulde you nat displese,
 We wolden, if it were your ese,
 A shorte sermon unto you sayne.'

And Wicked-Tonge answered agayne :
 ' The house,' quod he, ' such as ye se
 Shal nat be warnéd you for me, 7500
 Say what you lyst, and I wol here.'

' Graunt mercy, sweté sir, dere,'
 Quod alderfirst Dame Abstynence,
 And thus began she her sentence :

' Sir, the firste vertue certayne,
 The greatest, and moste soverayne
 That may be founde in any man
 For havyngé or for wytté he can,
 That is his tongé to refrayne.
 Therto ought every wight him payne,

7486. *Th. doughty*.

For it is better styllé be
Than for to speken harme, parde ;
And he that herkeneth it gladly,
He is no good man sykerly.

And, sir, aboven al other synne,
In that arte thou moste gylty inne.
Thou spake a jape not long a-go
(And, sir, that was ryght yvel do)
Of a yonge man, that here repayred
And never yet this place apayred. 7520
Thou saydest he awayted nothyng
But to disceyve Fayre-Welcomyng.
Ye saydè nothyng sothe of that ;
But, sir, ye lye, I tel you plat ;
He ne cometh no more, ne gothe, parde !
I trowe ye shal him never se.
Fayre-Welcomyng in puison is,
That ofte hath played with you er this
The fayrest gamés that he coude,
Withoutè fylthè, styl or loude ; 7530
Nowe dare he nat him selfe solace.
Ye han also the manne do chace,
That he dare neyther come ne go ;
What meveth you to hate him so,
But properly your wicked thought,
That many a false lesyng hath thought,
That meveth your foole eloquence,
That jangleth ever in audyence,
And on the folke areyseth blame,
And doth hem dishonour and shame, 7540
For thyng that maye have no prevyng
But lykelynesse, and contryvyng ?

For I dare sayne that reason demeth,
It is nat al sothe thyng that semeth ;
And it is synné to controuve
Thynge that is to reprove ;
This wote ye wele ; and, sir, therfore
Ye arne to blamè [wel] the more.
And nathelesse he recketh lyte
He yeveth nat nowe therof a myte, 7550
For if he thoughtè harme, parlaye,
He woldè come and gone al daye ;
He coudè himselfe nat abstene.
Nowe cometh he nat, and that is sene,
For he ne taketh of it no cure,
But if it be through aventure,
And lasse than other folke, algate.
And thou her watchest at the gate,
With speare in thyne arest alwaye ;

7531. Th. *she nat her selfe.*

There musè, musarde, al the daye. 7560
Thou wakest night and day for thought ;
I-wis thy traveyle is for nought.
And Ielousye, withouten fayle,
Shal never quyte the thy traveyle.
And skathe is that Fayre-Welcomyng
Withoutèn any trespassyng,
Shal wrongfully in prison be,
There wepeth and languysseth he.
And though thou never yet, y-wis,
Agyltest manne no more but this,— 7570
Take nat a grefe,—it were worthy
To putte the out of this bayly,
And afterwards in prison lye,
And fette the, tyl that thou dye.
For thou shalt for this synné dwelle
Right in the devels ers of helle,
But if that thou repentè thee.
'Mafay, thou liest falsly !' quod he.
'What? welcome with myschauncè nowè !
Have I therfore herberd yowe 7580
To seye me shame, and eke reprove
With sory happe, to youre bihove ?
Am I to day youre herbegere ?
Go herber yow elles-where than heere,
That han a lyer callèd me !
Two tregetours art thou and he,
That in myn hous do me this shame,
And for my sothe-saugh ye me blame.
Is this the sermoun that ye make ?
To all the develles I me take, 7590
Or elles, God, thou me confounde !
But er men didnen this castel founde,
It passith not ten daies or twelve
But it was tolde right to my selve,
And as they seide, right so tolde I :
He kyst the Rosé pryvly !
Thus seide I now and have seid yore ;
I not where he hidede any more.
Why shulde men sey me such a thyng
If it haddè bene gabbyng? 7600
Ryght so seide I and wol seye yit ;
I trowe I liéd not of it.
And with my bemés I wole blowe
To allè neighboris a-rowe,
How he hath bothè comen and gone.'
Tho spake Falssemblant right anone :
'All is not gospel, oute of doute,
That men seyn in the towne aboute ;

7603. *bemes*, 'besuines,' trumpets.

Ley no deef ere to my spekyng :
 I swere yow, sir, it is gabbyng ; 7610
 I trowe ye wote wel certeynly,
 That no man loveth hym tenderly
 That seith hym harme, if he wote it,
 All be he never so pore of wit.
 And soth is also sikerly
 (This knowe ye, sir, as wel as I)
 That lovers gladly wole visiten
 The places there her loves habiten.
 This man yow loveth and eke honoureth,
 This man to servé you laboureth, 7620
 And clepith you "his freend so deere,"
 And this man makith you good chere,
 And every-where that [he] you meteth
 He yow saloweth and he you greteth.
 He preseth not so ofte that ye
 Ought of his come encombred be ;
 Ther presen other folk on yow
 Full oft than he doth now.
 And if his herte hym streynéd so,
 Unto the Rosé fortó go, 7630
 Ye shulde hym sene so ofté nede,
 That ye shulde take hym with the dede.
 He cowde his comyng not forbere
 Though he hym thrilled with a spere :
 It nere not thanne as it is now.
 But trustith wel, I swere it yow.
 That it is clene out of his thought :
 Sir, certis he ne thenkith it nought,
 No more ne doth Faire-Welcomyng,
 That sore abieth al this thing. 7640
 And if they were of oon assent,
 Full sooné were the Rosé hent,
 The maugre youre woldé be.
 And, sir, of o thing herkeneth he :
 Sith ye this man that loveth yow
 Han seid such harme and shamé now,
 Witeth wel if he gesséd it,
 Ye may wel demen in youre wit
 He nolde no thyng love you so,
 Ne callen you his freende also ; 7650
 But nyght and day he wolde wake
 The castell to destroie and take,
 If it were soth as ye devise ;
 Or some man in some maner wise,
 Might it warne hym everydele,

7612. *hym*, etc., indefinite pronouns.

Or by hymself perceyven wele.
 For sith he myght not come and gone
 As he was whilom wont to done,
 He myght it soné wite and see.
 But now all other wise doth he. 7660
 Thanne have, [ye] sir, al outerly
 Deserved helle, and Iolyly
 The deth of hellé doutéles,
 That thrallen folk so giltéles.'

Fals Semblant proveth so this thing,
 That he can noon answeyng,
 And seth alwey such apparaunce,
 That nygh he fel in repentaunce
 And seidé hym :—'Sir, it may wel be,
 Semblant, a good man semen ye ; 7670
 And, Abstinence, full wise ye seme ;
 Of o talent you bothe I demé.
 What counceil wole ye to me yeven ?'
 'Ryght heereanoon thou shalt be shryven,
 And sey thy synne withouté more ;
 Of this shalt thou repenté sore.
 For I am prest, and have pouste
 To shryve folk of most dignyte
 That ben, as wide as world may dure,
 Of all this world I have the cure, 7680
 And that hadde never yit persoun,
 Ne vicarie of no maner toun.
 And, God wote, I have of thee
 A thousand tymé more pitee
 Than hath thi preest parochial,
 Though he thy freend be special.
 I have avauntage in o wise
 That youre prelatis ben not so wise,
 Ne half so lettred as am I.
 I am licenced boldely 7690
 To redé in Divinite
 And to confessén, out of drede.
 If ye wol you now confesse,
 And leve your sinnés more and lesse
 Withouté abood, knele down anon,
 And you shal have absolucion.'

7660. MSS. *wote* for *doth*.

7662. *Iolyly* is generally interpreted to be a strengthening adverb equivalent to 'bien' of Fr. ; but that is translated by *doutéles*. Such a use of 'jollyly' is difficult to explain. ? *fully*.

7691. G ends here with

To reden in Divinite
 And longe have red.

The French original goes on 9488 verses further.

GLOSSARY

WORDS still in use, with substantially the same meaning, are not included in this Glossary, which is intended for working purposes and not as a concordance. In most cases, to help identification, one reference is given to each word, for each of its obsolete meanings; but in a few words of common occurrence, transferred to this Glossary from that in the Eversley Edition of the *Canterbury Tales*, these references are omitted. In the references the letters A-I denote the various sections of the *Canterbury Tales*, An. *Anelida and Arcite*, As. the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, Bl. the *De the of Blaunche*, Bo. the *Boece*, HF the *Hous of Fame*, L. the *Legende of Good Women*, PF the *Parlement of Foules*, R the *Romaunt of the Rose*, T *Troilus and Criseyde*. In the case of the *Hous of Fame* and *Troilus*, the index figures give the number of the book in which the line quoted occurs, thus T² 357 denotes *Troilus*, Bk. ii. l. 357. The letters *i* and *y* being often used interchangeably in manuscripts, most *y*-forms are arranged in the order of *i*.

- A, *card. num.* one. T⁴ 1407
A, *interj.* ah. A 1078, R 2627
A, *prep.* on, in. A 3516, A 854
A, *v.* have. R 4322
Abayssed, Abayssched. Abayst. *p.p.* abashed
T³ 1233, Bo. 36, E 317
Abaved, Abawed, p.p. abashed, confounded.
Bl. 613, R 3646
Abegge. *v.* atone for. A 3938
Abet, sb. instigation. T² 357
Abit, abideth. G 1175
Abite, sb. habit, dress. R 4914
Able, adj. fit, apt. A 167
Ablynge, p. pres. giving power to. Bo. 220
Ablucons, sb. washings. G 856
Abood, sb. abiding, delay, A 965; **Abodes, p.l.**
T³ 854
Aboughte, p. et. of Abye. A 2303
Aboven, adv. uppermost in luck. R 4354
Abrayde. See **Abreyde**
Abregge, v. abridge. A 2909
Abreyde, v. awake, start. T³ 1113, A 2999 (*p.p.*)
Abroche, v. broach. D 177
Abusioun, sb. an abuse, scandal. T⁴ 990, 1060
Abye, v. pay for. C 765, Bo. 1350
Accessse, sb. fever-fit. T² 1543
Accident, sb. occurrence. T³ 918; changing
attribute, E 607
Accidie, sb. moral sloth. I 677
Accordaunt, adj. agreeable to. A 17
Accorden. See **Acorde**
Accouement, sb. accusation. T⁴ 550
Achaat, sb. buying. A 571
Achatours, sb. buyers. A 568
Achekked, p.p. checked. HF³ 1003
Achoken, v. suffocate, Bo. 443; **Achoked, p.p.**
choked, L 2008
Acloioeth, pres. lames, hinders. PF 517
Acoutynge, sb. reckoning. Bo. 41
Acoorde, pres. agree. L 3
Accorded, p. et. suited. A 243
Acorse, v. accuse. T³ 1072
Acoye, v. caress, appease. T⁵ 782, R 3504
Adamant, Adamaund, sb. ironstone, A 1990;
magnet, R 1182
Adawe, v. awake, T³ 1120; **Adawed, p.p.** E
2400
Adrad, p.p. afraid. A 605
Advertence, sb. attention. G 467
Advocacyes, sb. pl. pleas. T² 1469
Aferd, p.p. afraid. A 628
Affecioun, sb. desire. A 1158, L 1522
Affectes, sb. pl. desires. T³ 1391
Affye, v. trust. R 3155
Affle, v. polish. A 712
Affraye, v. affright. E 455
Afyn, adv. finally. R 3690
Aforne, adv. before. R 3614
Afor-yein, prep. opposite. T² 1188
Afounde, v. perish. *Rosmounde* 21
After-tales, adv. afterwards. T³ 224
Agayn, Agayns, prep. toward, against, in the
presence of. B 391, A 1500, C 743
Agaynward, adv. back. B 441
A-game, adv. in sport. T³ 568
Agaste, v. terrify. T² 901
Aggregated, p.p. aggravated. B 2205
Aggreggeth, v. pres. aggravates. B 2475
Agilten, v. offend. L 435
Ago, Agon, p.p. departed, E 1761; past, C 246
Agree, v. please. T¹ 409
Agrief, adv. sorrowfully. B 4083
Agryse, v. be horrified, shudder at. B 614,
D 1649
Agroos, Agrose, p. et. of Agryse. L 830, 2314
Agroteyd, p.p. surfeited. L 2454
Aguler, sb. needle-case. R 98
Aiel, sb. grandfather. A 2477
Ajourn, v. adjourn. *ABC* 158
Aketoun, sb. quilted tunic. B 2050

Aknowe, *v.* acknowledge. Bo. 140
Al, *adj.* all, A 2959; **Al and som**, the whole, everybody, A 2761, 3136
Al, *adv.* wholly, A 2968; **Al**, *conj.* although, L 1392
Al, *sb.* awl. *Truth* 11
Alambic, *sb.* alembic. T⁴ 520
Alauntz, *sb.* boardrounds. A 2148
Alayes, *sb.* alloys. F 1167
Al-day, *adv.* continually. B 1702
Alder, *prefix*, of all; **Oure alder**, of us all, R 6048
Alenge, *adj.* wretched. B 1412
Alestake, *sb.* pole bearing alehouse sign. A 667
Alays, *sb.* alley. B 1758
Aleys, *sb.* pl. fruit of the wild service tree. R 1377
Algate, *adv.* always, A 571; any way, A 3962
Algates, *adv.* any way. T³ 24
Aliene, *v.* alienate. Bo. 237
Allyned, *p.p.* placed in lines. HF³ 34 (*emend.*)
Alkamystre, *sb.* alchemist. G 1204
Alle, *dat. sing.* (Bl. 1284) and *nom. plur.* (Bl. 1051) of **Al**
Alloge, *v.* (1) allege, E 1658; quote (*pres.*) HF¹ 314; (2) alleviate (alegghith), R 2588
Aller, *gen. plur.* of **Al**. A 823
All-oute, *adv.* entirely. R 4326
Allowe, *v. pres.* approve. F 676
Almanderes, *sb.* pl. almond-trees. R 1303
Almesse, *sb.* alms. B 168
Almycanteras, *sb.* pl. circles or parallels of altitude. As. i. § 18
Almury, *sb.* the pointer of an astrolabe. As. i. § 22
Along on, *prep.* owing to. T² 1001
Alose, *v.* praise, T⁴ 1473; **Alosed**, *p.p.* R 2354
Alpes, *sb.* pl. bullfinches. R 658
Als, *adv.* as. A 170
Alswa, *adv.* also. A 4085
Alther, *prefix*, of all
Altitude, *sb.* the elevation of a star, etc., above the horizon. As. i. §§ 1, 13
Al to, *intensive prefix*, e.g. **Alto-share**, *pret.* cut in pieces. R 1858
Alweys, *adv.* at all events. T⁵ 298
Amadriades, *sb.* pl. hamadryads. A 2928
Amalgamyng, *sb.* the compounding of quicksilver with some other metal. G 771
Amanuced, *p.p.* diminished. Bo. 118
Amayed, *p.p.* dismayed. T⁴ 641
Ambages, *sb.* pl. duplicities. T⁵ 807
Ambes as, both aces, double ace. B 124
Amblere, *sb.* easy-paced horse. A 469
Ameled, *p.p.* enmeshed. R 1080
Amenuse, *v.* diminish, I 358; depreciate, I 496
Amenusyng, *sb.* diminution. Bo. 428
Amerolimentz, *sb.* pl. fines. I 752
Ameved, *pret.* changed; **Amoeved**, *p.p.* disturbed. Bo. 25
Amyddes, *prep.* in the midst of. A 2009
Amynistreth, *pres.* administrators. Bo. 1467
Amoeved. See **Ameved**
Amonesten, *v.* warn, admonish. I 76
Amorettes, *sb.* pl. amorous girls. R 892, 4755
Amphibologies, *sb.* pl. equivocation. T⁴ 1406
An, *prep.* in, on. Bo. 1668
Anclle, *sb.* handmaid. ABC 109
Ancles, *sb.* ankle. A 1660
Anore, *sb.* anchor. *Fortune* 38
And, *conj.* if. L 1790
Angerly, *adv.* grievously. R 3511

Angres, *sb.* pl. griefs. R 2554
Angry, *adj.* grievous. R 2628
Anguysschous, **Angwyssous**, *adj.* anxious. Bo. 482, 603
Anientissed, *p.p.* annihilated. B 2435
Anker, *sb.* (1) anchor, R 3780; (2) anchoress, R 6348
Anlaas, *sb.* dagger. A 357
Annueleer, *sb.* priest singing anniversary masses. G 1212
Anon-right, *adv.* forthwith. L 115
Anoyouse, *adj.* p'. troublesome. I 728
Antiphoner, *sb.* book of anthems. B 1709
Anvelt, *sb.* anvil. Bl. 1164
Aornement, *sb.* adornment. I 432
Apayed, *p.p.* pleased, contented. I. 766, T¹ 649
Apaisen, *pres. pl.* appease. T³ 22
Appaled. See **Appalled**
Aparaunce, *sb.* appearance. L 1372
Appased, *p.p.* passed away. Bo. 429
Apseyren, *v.* impair, depreciate. I 1078, A 3147
Apert, *adj.* open, frank. D 1114
Apertenant, *adj.* belonging to. *Pite* 70
Apertenen, *v.* belong to. I 410
Apertly, *adv.* openly, clearly. I 294
Apiked, *p.p.* trimmed. A 365
A-poynt, *adv.* exactly. T⁵ 1620
Apoinde, *reflex v.* make up one's mind. T² 691
Appalled, *p.p.* made pale or feeble. F 365, B 1292
Apparaille, *sb.* apparel. ABC 153
Apparaillements, *sb.* pl. garments. Bo. 465
Apparailien, *v.* prepare. B 2530
Appetite, *sb.* desire, lust. A 1680, L 1586
Appetith, *pres. s.* seeks. L 1582
Apposed, *pret.* examined. G 363
Approved, *p.p.* approved, confirmed. E 1349, I. 21
Appropried, *p.p.* appropriated, peculiar to. *Genetillesse* 18
Approwours, *sb.* pl. informers. D 1343
Aqueyntaunce, *sb.* acquaintance. A 245
Aqueynte, *v.* acquaint. B 511
Arace, *v.* tear away, F 1393; **Arased**, torn, Bo. 80
Arbitre, *sb.* choice. Bo. 1674
Arblastars, *sb.* pl. crossbowmen. R 4196
Archaungell, *sb.* titmouse. R 915
Ardaunt, *adj.* ardent, burning. Bo. 1394
Arede, *v.* interpret. Bl. 289
Aresoneth, *pres.* controverts. R 6220
Arrest, *sb.* See **Arrest**
Arrette, *v.* account, attribute, A 726, R 3327; **Arretted**, A 2729
Arewe, *adv.* in a row. D 1254
Argolle, *sb.* crude tartar made from crust of wine. G 81
Argumentz, *sb.* pl. angles on which tabulated quantities depend in astronomy. F 1277
Aryght, *adv.* exactly. A 267
Arist, *pres.* aritheth. B 265
Arist, *sb.* arising. As. ii. § 12 [200]
Aryve, *sb.* disembarkation. A 60 (*var.*)
Aryved, *p.p.* sent to land. Bo. 1312
Armee, *sb.* expedition. A 60 (Ellesmere)
Armypotente, *adj.* mighty in arms. A 2441
Armonyak, *adj.* Armenian; ammoniac. G 790
Armonyse, *sb.* harmony. PF 63
Arn, *pres. pl.* are. T⁴ 972

A-roume, *adv.* at large. HF² 33
A-rowe, *adv.* in a row. L 554
Arrest, *sb.* socket of a spear. A 2602
Arreste, *sb.* restraint, delay. L 307, 896
Arrygage, *sb.* disembarking. HF¹ 223
Arismetrik, *sb.* arithmetic. A 1898
Arten, *v.* constrain. T¹ 388
Artyk, *adj.* arctic. As. i. § 14
Artow, art thou. A 1141
Arwes, *sb. pl.* arrows. A 107
Ascapen, *pres. pl.* escape. Bo. 1361
Ascaunce, *adv.* as though, forsooth. G 838
Ascendent, *sb.* planetary influence. A 417; *see* As. ii. § 4 [151-165]
Assory, *sb.* shout. T² 611
Ashen, *sb. pl.* ashes. A 1364
Aslake, *v.* abate. A 3553; **Aslaked**, A 1760
Aslope, *adv.* aside, crossly. R 4464
Aspe, *sb.* aspen tree. A 2921, PF 180
Aspectes, *sb. pl.* planetary relations. T² 682
Aspyen, *v.* espy. T² 649
Aspre, *adj.* rough, bitter. An. 23, Bo. 590
Aspranesso, *sb.* bitterness. Bo. 1370
Assautes, *sb. pl.* assaults. I 729
Assay, *sb.* experiment. L 9
Assaye, *v.* assay, try. Bl. 346
Assaged, *p. p.* besieged. A 881
Assent, *sb.* agreement, plot. C 758, l. 1547
Assente, *v.* agree to. A 374
Asseth, *adv.* enough; **Make asseth**, satisfy, R 5600
Asshy, *adj.* sprinkled with ashes. A 2883
Assize, *sb.* assize. A 314
Assollen, *v.* absolve, C 939; discharge, Bo. 1621; resolve, Bo. 1677
Assollyng, *sb.* absolution. A 661
Assure, *sb.* assurance. An. 331
Asstate, *sb.* estate. R 6856
Asterte, *v.* start away, escape. A 1595; **Astert**, **Asterted**, *p. p.* A 1592, B 437
Astonyed, *p. p.* astonished. HF² 41, A 2361
Astonyng, *sb.* astonishment. Bo. 55
A-stored, *p. p.* stored, provided. A 609
Astromye, *sb.* astronomy. A 3451
Asure, *sb.* blue. An. 330
A-sweved, *p. p.* dazed. HF² 41
At-after, *prep.* after. E 1921, F 30
Atake, *v.* overtake. G 556
Atanes, *adv.* at once. A 4074
Atazir, *sb.* adverse planetary influence. B 305
Ateyne, *v.* attain, *Mars* 161; **Ateynt**, *p. p.* attained, comprehended, Bo. 275
Atempraunce, *sb.* temperance. Bo. 1496
Atempre, *adj.* temperate. L 128, 1483, B 2177
Atthinken, *v.* vex. T⁵ 878
Atyr, *sb.* attire. I 430, T¹ 181
Aton, *adv.* together. E 437
Atones, **Attones**, *adv.* at once. I. 102
At-rede, *v.* outwit, surpass in advice. A 2449
At-renne, *v.* outrun. A 2449
Attamed, *p. p.* broached. B 4008
Atte, at the. A 125, R 4192
Attempre. *See* **Atempre**
Atthamaunt, *sb.* adamant. A 130,
Attour, *sb.* attire. R 3718
Attricoun, *sb.* contrition. T¹ 557
Attry, *adj.* venomous. I 583
Atwixe, **Atwixen**, *adv.* between. As. ii. § 5 [173], T⁵ 886
Atwynne, *adv.* apart. A 3580

Autoritee, *sb.* authority, especially of an esteemed writer. R 2394
Auotour, *sb.* author. L 470
Augrym, *sb.* arithmetical notation, As. i. § 8;
Augrym stones, arithmetical counters, A 3210
Aument, *v.* augment. R 5597
Aungelyke, *adv.* angel-like. I. 236
Auntred, *pret.* adventured. A 4205
Auntrous, *adj.* adventurous. A 2099
Autentyke, *adj.* authentic. Bl. 1085
Auter, *sb.* altar. A 1905
Avale, *v.* fall, T³ 626; doff, A 3122; descend, Bo. 1558
Avauunce, *v.* profit. A 246
Avant, *adv.* forward. R 4790
Avault, *sb.* boast, bold statement. T³ 289, A 227
Avantour, *sb.* boaster. B 4107
Avenaunt, *adj.* comely, suitable. R 1263, 3679
Aventaille, *sb.* helmet's front. E 1204
Aventourous, *adj.* accidental. Bo. 248
Adventure, *sb.* adventure, chance. A 1160, 244
Avys, *sb.* deliberation. A 786, T³ 453
Avyse, *p. ex.* observe, look to. E 1988
Avysement, *sb.* deliberation. T⁴ 936
Avisioun, *sb.* vision. Bl. 285
Avowtrie, *sb.* adultery. B 2220
Await, *sb.* watch, II 149; delay, T³ 580,
Awaytes, ambushes, strategies, Bo. 778
Awatour, *sb.* one who lies in wait. Bo. 1306
Awen, *adj.* own. A 4239
Awmenere, **Awmere**, *sb.* alms-bag. R 2087, 2271
Awreke, *v.* avenge. *Pite* 11; **Awroken**, *p. p.* A 3752
Axe, *pres.* ask. A 1739
Axyng, *sb.* asking, question. A 1826, Bl. 33
Ay, *adv.* always. A 63
Ayeins, *prep.* against. I. 330
Ayeynward, *adv.* on the other hand. T⁴ 1027
Azimuthes, *sb. pl.* divisions of an astrolabe. As. i. § 19
Ba, *imperat.* kiss. A 3709
Baar, *pret.* bare. A 1180
Babewynnes, *sb. pl.* (baboons) grotesques. HF³ 99
Bachelrye, *sb.* the bachelors. E 270
Baggeth, *pres.* squints. Bl. 622
Baggyngly, *adv.* squintingly. R. 292
Bailie, *sb.* jurisdiction, R. 4217; **Baily**, bailiff, R 6331
Baiten, *v.* feed. B 466, T¹ 193
Bak, *sb.* backcloth. G 881 (*var.*)
Balaunce, *sb.* In **balaunce**, at hazard, in uncertainty. G 611, R 4667
Bale, *sb.* harm. Bl. 534
Balkes, *sb. pl.* beams. A 3626
Balled, *adj.* bald. A 198
Banes, *sb. pl.* bones. A 4073
Bar, *pret.* bare; **Bar on honde**, accused, T² 1154, An. 158
Barbe, *sb.* a kind of veil. T² 110
Barbour, *sb.* barber-surgeon. A 2025
Barbre, *adj.* barbarous. A 281
Bareyne, *adj.* barren. A 1244
Barel, *sb.* barrel. B 3083
Bargeyn, *sb.* strife. R 2551
Barm, *sb.* bosom. F 631
Barm-cloth, *sb.* apron. A 3236

- Barres**, *sb. pl.* cross-stripes. A 329, R 1103
Barrynge, *sb.* cross-stripping. I 417
Basilcock, *sb.* basilisk. I 853
Batalled, *p.p.* battlemented, indented. B 4050
Batailles, *sb. pl.* battle. A 61
Bate, *sb.* strife. R 4235
Bathe, *adj.* both. A 4087
Bauderie, *sb.* gaiety. A 1926
Baudy, *adj.* dirty. G 635
Baundon, *sb.* control. R 1163
Bawdryk, *sb.* baldrick, belt. A 116
Bawme, *sb.* balm. T² 53, HF³ 596
Bayard, *sb.* proverbial name for a horse. G 1413
Be. See also **Bi**
Be, *prep.* by. B1. 1330
Beautee, *sb.* beauty. A 1026
Bechen, *adj.* made of beech. G 1160
Bede, **Beede**, *v.* offer. T³ 185, G 1065
Bedes, *sb. pl.* beads. A 159
Bedrede, *adj.* bedridden. E 129
Beel, *adj.* good, fine. B 1599
Been, *v.* to be. A 140; *pres. pl.* B 142
Been, *sb. pl.* bees. F 205
Beere, *sb.* hier. B 1815
Beet, *pres.* touched. R 129
Beete, *v.* kindle. A 2253
Beete, *v.* mend. A 3927
Beggester, *s.* (beggar woman) beggar. A 242
Behoteth, *pres.* promises. B1. 620
Bekked, *pres.* nodded. T² 1260
Beknew, *pres.* confessed. L 1058
Bela, *adj.* fair. T² 288
Belweth, *pres.* bellows. HF³ 703
Bely, *sb.* bellows. I 353
Bely-naked, *adj.* stark naked. E 1326
Beme, *sb.* trumpet. B 4588
Bend, *sb.* strap. R 1079
Bendynge, *sb.* slant-stripping. I 417
Benedicite, **Benediste**, bless ye. B 1170, T¹ 780
Bente, *sb. dat.* grassy slope. A 1081
Be-nymen, *v.* take away. Bo. 128
Berd, *sb.* beard, A 332; **Make a berd**, outwit, A 4096; so **Berdes**, deceits, HF³ 181
Bere, *sb.* (1) bear, A 1640; (2) bier, *Pite* 105; (3) pillow-case, B1. 254; pillow, T² 1638
Bere, *v.* bear, carry. B 3564
Bere on hond, accuse falsely, D 393; cheat into believing, D 232
Bere thurgh, pierce. A 2250
Berynge, *sb.* behaviour. B 2022
Berne, *sb.* yeast. G 813
Berne, *sb. dat.* barn. A 3258
Bessaunt-wight, weighing a bezant. R 1106
Beseye, *p.p.* beseeen. B1. 828
Best, *sb.* beast. A 1076
Bet, *adj. comp.* better, B 311; *adv.* A 742; **Go bet**, go quickly, L 1213
Bete. See **Beete**
Beth, *pres.* be, are. A 178
Betten, *p.p.* kindled. G 518
Beye, *v.* buy. G 637
Bibbed, *p.p.* drunk. A 4102
Bi-bledde, *p.p.* bloodied. A 2222
Bicched, *p.p.* cursed. C 656
Bi-clappe, *v.* clap down, trap. G 9
Bidaffed, *p.p.* fooled. E 1191
Biddyng, *sb.* praying. G 140
Bien, *pres. pl.* buy. R 452
Bier, *sb.* buyer. R 5928
Bygyns, *sb. pl.* béguines. R 6861
Bygoon, *p.p.* begone, clothed. R 943
Biheste, *sb.* promise. B 41
Biheste, **Bihoite**, *v.* promise. A 1854
Biight, *p.p.* promised
Byhove, *sb.* profit. R 1092
Bihevoly, *adj.* advantageous. T² 261
BiJaped, *p.p.* tricked. A 1585
Biknowe, *v.* confess. A 1556
Bildere, *sb.* for *adj.* builder. PF 176
Biles, *sb. pl.* beaks. HF² 360
Bilve, *sb.* belief, creed. A 3456
Bille, *sb.* petition. C 166
Bimene, *v.* bemoan. R 2667
Bynymeth, *pres.* takes away from. I 335
Biseken, *pres. pl.* beseech. A 918
Bisemare, *sb.* abusiveness. A 3965
Bisette, *pres.* employed. A 279
Biseye, *p.p.* beseeen; **Yuele** (**richely**) **biseye**, of an ill (rich) appearance. E 965, 984
Bi-shet, *p.p.* shut up. T³ 602
Bismotered, *p.p.* soiled. A 76
Bistad, *p.p.* bestead. B 649
Bit, *biddeth*. A 187
Bitake, *pres.* commend'to. A 3750
Bitche, *pres.* commit to. B 2114
Bitymes, *adv.* betimes, speedily. G 1006
Bitit, *biddeth*. T² 48
Bitore, *sb.* bitter. D 972
Bitrayshed, **Bitresshed**, *p.p.* betrayed. B 3570. R 1648
Bitrent, *pres.* clasps, encircles. T³ 1231, T⁴ 870
Biwreye, *v.* betray. A 2229
Blakeberyed, **goon a**, go blackberrying, go where they will. C 406
Blaked, *p.p.* blackened. B 321
Blanche, *adj.* white. T³ 916
Blankmanger, *sb.* blanc-mange. A 377
Blasen, *v.* blow. HF³ 712
Bleyne, *sb.* blain. R 553
Bleynte, *pres.* blenched. A 1078
Blomessched, *p.p.* injured. Bo. 170
Blendith, *pres.* blinds. Bo. 1381
Blere, *v.* blind. A 4049
Bleve, *v.* remain. T³ 623
Blyne, *v.* cease. G 1171, R 6011
Blyve, *adv.* quickly. A 2697
Blo, *adj.* blue. HF³ 557
Blosmes, *sb. pl.* blossoms. L 143
Blowyng, *p. pres.* panting. Bo. 1297
Bobounce, *sb.* boast. D 569
Boch, *sb.* swelling. Bo. 693
Bocher, *sb.* butcher. A 2025
Bode, *sb.* delay. An. 119
Boden, *p.p.* hidden. L 366
Boes, *pres.* it behoves. A 4027
Boydekin, *sb.* bodkin, dagger. B 3892
Boyste, *sb.* box. C 307
Boystous, *adj.* tough. H 211
Bokeler, *sb.* buckler. A 1172, 3206
Boket, *sb.* bucket. A 1531
Bolas, *sb.* bullace. R 1387
Boles, *sb. pl.* bulls. A 2139
Bon, *adj.* good. HF² 514
Bone, *sb.* prayer. B1. 834
Boole, *sb.* astringent earth. G 790
Boon, *sb.* bone. A 1177
Boor, *sb.* boar. A 2070
Boos, *sb.* boss. A 3266
Roost, **Bosto**, *sb.* talk, outcry. A 4001, L 887

Boot, *pret.* bit. B 3791
Boot, *sb.* boat. E 1424
Boote, *sb.* remedy. A 424
Borax, *sb.* borax. A 630
Bord, *sb.* (1) a table, A 52; (2) ship's side, A 3585
Bordels, *sb. pl.* brothels. I 885
Bordillers, *sb. pl.* keepers of brothels. R 7034
Borel, *Burel*, *adj.* coarse, common. R 3145, D 1872, F 716
Borken, *pret.* barked. Bo. 106
Borneth, *pres.* burnishes. T¹ 327
Borwe, *sb.* pledge, surety. A 1622, B 2995
Bosarde, *sb.* buzzard. R 4033
Boste. See **Boost**
Bote, (1) remedy; (2) boat. See **Boot**
Botel, *sb.* bottle. H 141
Boteler, *sb.* butler. H¹² 84
Bother, *gen.* of both. T¹ 168
Bothon, *sb.* bud. R 2960
Botme, *sb.* bottom. G 1321
Botoun, *sb.* bud. R 1721
Bouk, *sb.* body. A 2746
Boun. See **Bown**
Bountee, *sb.* goodness. B 1656
Bourde, *pres.* jest, C 778; **Bourded**, *p.p.* jested, PF 589
Bourde, *sb. dat.* jest. H 81
Boures, *sb. gen.* bedchamber. A 3677
Bourgerons, *sb. pl.* sodomites. R 7022
Bowes, *sb. pl.* boughs. A 1641
Bown, *adj.* ready. F 1593
Bracer, *sb.* arm-guard. A 111
Brade, *adj.* broad. R 4200
Bragot, *sb.* ale and meal. A 3761
Brayd, *p.p.* started. An. 124
Brayde, *sb.* restless turn, I. 1166; **At a braid**, immediately, R 1366
Brak, *pret.* broke
Braat, *pret.* burst
Brat, *sb.* cloak. G 811
Bratful, *adj.* See **Bretful**
Brawn, *sb.* muscle, A 546; *pl.* A 2135
Brede, *sb.* roast meat. HF³ 132
Brede, *sb.* breadth. A 3811
Breyde, *v.* start, awake. A 483
Breke, *v.* break. A 551
Brekke, *sb.* flaw. Bl. 939
Breme, *adj.* fierce, T¹ 184; *adv.* A 1690
Bren, *sb.* bran. A 4053
Brennen, *v.* burn, B 111; *p.p.* brent, brend, R 1109
Brennynge, *sb.* burning. A 996
Breres, *sb. pl.* briars. R 3006
Bresten, *v.* burst. A 1980
Bretful, **Bratful**, *adj.* full to the brim. A 687, 2164
Breve, *adj.* brief. R 2350
Brybe, *v.* steal, cheat. A 4417, D 1378
Briberyes, *sb. pl.* rascalities. A 1367
Bryd, *sb.* bird. A 3805
Bryge, *sb.* quarrel. B 2870
Brihte, *adj.* bright. ABC 181
Brike, *sb.* trap. B 3580
Brocage, *sb.* brokery, jobbery. A 3375
Broche, *sb.* brooch. Mars 245
Brode, *adj.* broad. A 739
Broyded, *p.p.* braided. A 1049
Brokkyng, *p. pres.* warbling. A 3377
Bromes, *sb. pl.* broom bushes. HF³ 136

Brondes, *sb. pl.* brands, torches. A 2338
Brood, *adj.* broad. A 549
Brotel, **Brutel**, *adj.* brittle, unstable. I. 1885, 2556, Ho. 421
Brouke, *v.* enjoy, use. B 4490, L 194
Browdyng, *sb.* embroidery. A 2498
Browken. See **Brouke**
Brustles, *sb. pl.* bristles. A 556
Brutel. See **Brotel**
Bukke, *sb.* buck; **Blow the bukkes horn**, have trouble for nothing. A 3387
Bulte, *v.* sift. B 4430
Bulte, *pret.* built. A 1548
Burdons, *sb. pl.* burdens. R 6908
Burdoun, *sb.* (1) bass, A 673; (2) cudgel. R 3401
Burel. See **Borel**
Burned, *p.p.* burnished. A 1983
Burnet, *adj.* of brown material, R 226; **Burnettes**, *pl.* dresses of brown, R 4756
Busk, *sb.* bush. A 2013, R 54
But-if, *conj.* unless. A 351
Buxom, *adj.* obedient. B 1432
By, *prep.* concerning. I. 271
By and by, *adv.* side by side, in order. A 1011, L 304
Byle, *sb.* beak. B 4051
Bynt, *bindeth*. Mars 47
Bytrashed, *p.p.* betrayed. R 3910
Caas. See **Gas**
Caytyves, *sb. pl.* wretches. A 924
Calcenynge, *sb.* calcination. G 771
Calculynge, *sb.* reckoning. T¹ 71
Caleweis, *sb. pl.* pears. R 7043
Calkuler, *sb.* the pointer of an astrolabe
Calte, *sb.* head-dress. D 1018, T³ 775; *cp.* Howve
Cam, *pret.* came. A 547
Camaille, *sb.* camel. E 1196
Camuse, *adj.* flat. A 3934
Canel-boon, *sb.* collar-bone. Bl. 942
Canell, *sb.* cinnamon. R 1370
Canevas, *sb.* canvas
Canker-dort, *sb.* state of suffering. T² 1752
Cantel, *sb.* portion. A 3008
Cape, *pres.* *pl.* gape. T³ 1133
Capitayn, *sb.* captain. B 3741
Capul, *sb.* palfrey. A 4088
Cardynacle, *sb.* heart-disease. C 313
Careyne, *sb.* carcass, B 3814; corpse, A 2013
Carf, *pret.* carved. A 100
Carriage, *sb.* toll, tax. R 21, I 752, Ho. 118
Carl, *sb.* churl. A 545
Carmes, *sb. pl.* Carmelites. R 7460
Carpe, *v.* chatter. A 194
Carryk, *sb.* ship of burden. D 1688
Cas, *sb.* case, quiver. A 2080
Cas, *sb.* case, fortune, A 1411; chance, A 814;
Caas, *pl.* law-cases, A 323
Caste, *pret.* devised, B 406; reckoned, A 2172
Castes, *sb. pl.* contrivances. A 2668
Catel, *sb.* chattels. A 373
Celebrable, *adj.* famous. Bo. 820
Celle, *sb.* (1) cellar, A 3822; (2) religious house, A 172; (3) brain, B 3162
Cenyth, *sb.* zenith. As. i. § 18
Ceptr, *sb.* sceptre. B 3563
Cered, *p.p.* sealed. G 808
Cerial ook, *sb.* holm oak. A 2290

Certeyn, (1) *adv.* certainly; (2) *sb.* a certain quantity, G 776; (3) **IN certeyn**, certainly, T⁴ 908

Ceruce, *sb.* white lead. A 630

Cetewale, *sb.* valerian. A 3207

Ceynt, *sb.* girdle. A 3235

Chaar, *sb.* car. A 2138

Chaffare, *sb.* merchandise, B 1475; business, E 2438

Chalaundre, **Chelaundre**, *sb.* sort of lark. R 914, 81

Chalons, *sb.* coverlets from Chalons. A 4140

Chamberere, *sb.* maid-servant. E 819

Champartie, *sb.* partnership. A 1949

Chanoun, *sb.* canon. G 720

Chaped, *p.p.* capped. A 366

Chapeleyn, *sb.* nun who said minor offices. A 164

Chapmanhode, *sb.* business. B 143

Chapmen, *sb. pl.* merchants. B 136

Charbocle, *sb.* carbuncle. B 2061

Charge, *sb.* harm, A 2287; load, An. 32

Chargeant, *adj.* burdensome. B 2430

Chartres, *sb. pl.* agreements. T³ 340

Chasted, *p.p.* chastised. F 491

Chasteleyn, *sb.* chatelaine. R 3740

Chasteyne, *sb.* chestnut. A 1921

Chaunterie, *sb.* endowment for singing masses for the dead. A 510

Cheere, *sb.* manner, A 139; countenance, A 013

Cheese, *imperf.* choose. A 1595

Cheeste, *sb.* strife. I 556

Cheewe, *v.* succeed. G 1225

Chek, *interj.* check. Bl. 658

Chekkere, *sb.* chess-board. Bl. 659

Chelaundre. See **Chalaundre**

Chepe, *sb.* purchase, bargain, cheapness. HF³ 884

Cherete, *sb.* dearthness. R 3516

Cheste, *sb.* coffin. E 29

Chevered, *p.p.* shivered. R 1732

Chevesaille, *sb.* collar. R 1032

Chewise, *v.* procure. *Mars* 290, R 6425

Cheyssaunce, *sb.* borrowing. B 1519, A 281

Chiohe *adj.* parsimonious. R 5588

Chideresse, **Chidestere**, *sb.* scold. R 4266. E 1535

Chiertee, *sb.* affection, F 881; dearthness, B 1526

Chike, *sb.* chick. R 541

Chiknes, *sb. pl.* chickens. A 380

Chilyndre, *sb.* pocket sundial. B 1396

Chymbe, *v.* chime. A 3896

Chyngerie, *sb.* parsimony. B 2790

Chinynge, *p. pres.* splitting. Bo. 231

Chiroche, *sb.* church. A 460

Chiroche-hawes, *sb. pl.* churchyards. I 801

Chirketh, *pres.* twitters. D 1804

Chirkyng, *sb.* murmuring. A 2004

Chit, *chideth*. G 921

Chiteren, *pres.* chatter. G 1397

Chivachie, *sb.* expedition. A 86

Choys, *sb.* choice. B 2273

Clergis, *sb. pl.* tapers. R 6248

Ciser, *sb.* cider. B 3245

Oitole, *sb.* stringed instrument of music. A 1959

Oitrinacioun, *sb.* turning citron colour. G 816

Clapers, *sb. pl.* burrows. R 1405

Clappe, *pres.* babble. G 905

Clappen, *v.* (1) beat, HF³ 734; (2) clatter, babble, G 965, E 1200

Clappyng, *sb.* chatter. E 999

Claree, *sb.* spiced wine. A 1471

Clawe, *v.* rub, scratch. A 4326, D 940

Cleped, *p.p.* called. A 121

Clergeoun, *sb.* chorister. B 1693

Clergial, *adj.* clerkly. G 752

Clerk, *sb.* scholar. A 285

Clew, *pret.* clawed, rubbed. HF³ 612

Clifte, *sb.* cranny. Bo. 1406

Clyket, *sb.* latch-key. E 2046

Clippeth, *pres.* hugs. E 2413

Clipsi, *adj.* eclipsed, obscure. R 5340

Clyven, *pres. pl.* cleaves. Bo. 376

Clyves, *sb. pl.* cliffs. L 1470

Clyvyng, *p. pres.* cleaving. Bo. 1460

Cloysterer, *sb.* monk. A 259

Clom, *int.* hush. A 3638

Clos, **Cloos**, *adj.* secret. T² 1534, R 6104

Clos, *sb.* a pen, enclosure. B 4550, Bo. 205

Closer, *sb.* enclosure. R 4069

Clothelesf, *sb.* burdock-leaf. G 571

Clothred, *p.p.* clotted. E 2745

Clowes, *sb. pl.* claws. HF³ 696

Cod, *sb.* bag. C 534

Confedred, *p.p.* confederated. *Pite* 57

Cogge, *sb.* small boat. L 1481

Coillons, *sb. pl.* testicles. C 957

Cokenay, *sb.* milk-vop. A 4208

Cokewold, *sb.* cuckold. A 3152

Cokkow, *sb.* cuckoo. A 1930

Col-blak, *adj.* coal-black. A 2142

Colde, *v.* grow cold. B 879, L 240

Colered, *p.p.* collared. A 2157

Col-fox, *sb.* brant-fox. B 4405

Collacioun, *sb.* conference, E 325; comparison, Bo. 1862

Collect, *sb.* table of planetary motions. F 1275

Colours, *sb. pl.* ornaments of style. F 39

Colpons, *sb. pl.* shreds. A 679

Columbyn, *adj.* dove-like. E 2141

Colver, *sb.* dove. L 2319

Combre-world, *sb.* useless creature. T⁴ 279

Combust, *p.p.* burnt up. T³ 717, As. ii. § 4 [104]

Come, *sb.* coming. R 7626

Commoevened, *pret. pl.* influenced. T³ 17

Commune, *sb.* the commons. E 70

Compassement, *sb.* contrivance. L 1416

Composicioun, *sb.* agreement. A 2651

Compotent, *adj.* almighty. Bo. 1871

Compowned, *p.p.* composed. As. ii. § 5

Comprehended, *p.p.* summed up. An. 83

Comunte, *sb.* community. R 5209

Comyn, *sb.* cummin. B 2045

Concours, *sb.* course. R 4370

Conclacioun, *sb.* temperament. L 40

Constabларыe, *sb.* constable's jurisdiction. R 4218

Confedred, *p.p.* confederated. *Pite* 47

Confus, *adj.* confused. A 2230

Congeyn, *v.* dismiss. T⁵ 479

Conyes, *sb. pl.* rabbits. PF 193

Coninges, *sb. pl.* conies. R 7044

Conisaunce, *sb.* acquaintance, R 4668; know-

ledge, R 5465, 5559

Conjecte, **Conjecte**, *v.* conjecture. Bo. 228,

R 6928

Conne, *v.* can be able, know

Connes, *sb. pl.* conies, rabbits. R 1404

Conporte, *v.* bear. T³ 1397

Consistorie, *sb.* judgment-seat. C 162

Contek, *sb.* strife, A 2003; **Contekes**, *pl.* dissensions, B 4122
Contrive, *v.* contrive. R 7545
Contubernyal, *sb.* fellow-soldier. I 760
Continue, *v.* continue. R 5205
Convenably, *adv.* suitably. B 2420
Conveyen, *v.* convey. E 55
Cope, *sb. dat.* top. A 554
Cope, *sb.* cape. A 260
Coppe, *sb. dat.* cup. I 324
Corageous, *adj.* ardent. I 585
Corages, *sb. pl.* hearts. A 11
Corbets, *sb. pl.* architectural ornaments. HF³ 214
Cornemuse, *sb.* bagpipe. HF³ 128
Corniculer, *sb.* adjutant. G 369
Corruptable, *adj.* corruptible. A 3010
Corruppen, *v.* rot, Bo. 987; **Corrupted**, *p.p.* corrupted, I 819
Cors, *sb.* body, corpse. B 2098, A 3429
Corseint, *sb.* holy body, relic. HF⁴ 117
Cosynage, *sb.* kinship. B 1226
Cosse, *sb.* kiss. R 3663
Cost, *s.* coast, place. R 3931
Costage, *sb.* expense. R 1235
Costeyng, *p. pres.* coasting, skirting R 134
Costrel, *sb.* bottle. L 2666
Cote, *sb. dat.* dungeon. A 2457
Couched, *p.p.* laid, A 2933; **inlaid**, A 2161
Couchen, *v.* lay. G 1152, R 6903
Coude, *pres.* knew. A 327
Counter-taille, *sb.* counter-tally. F 1190
Countour, *sb.* auditor. A 359
Countrepeise, *v.* balance. HF³ 660
Countre-pleied, *p.p.* contrived. L 476
Countrewayte, *v.* watch against. B 2505, I 100
Coupable, *adj.* guilty. Bo. 70
Coured, *pres.* covered. R 465
Courtesy, *sb.* cape. A 290
Couth, *p.p.* plain, evident. R 4213
Couth, *adv.* patently. HF² 249
Covenable, *adj.* suitable. I 80
Covent, *sb.* convent of monks. B 1827
Coverchiefs, *sb. pl.* kerchiefs. A 453
Coverole, *sb.* lid of a cup. HF² 284
Covered, *p.p.* recovered. L 762
Covyne, *sb.* craft, intriguing. R 3799, A 604
Coye, *v.* quiet. T² 801
Coynes, *sb. pl.* quinces. R 1374
Cracohynge, *sb.* scratching. A 2834
Craketh, *pres.* sings hoarsely. E 1850
Crampissheth, *pres.* cramps. An. 171
Creance, *sb.* belief, B 340; **debt**, ABC 61
Creance, *v.* get credit, B 1479; **creanced**, *p.p.* raised on credit, B 1556
Crece, *sb.* increase. R 4875
Crekes, *sb. pl.* devices. A 4051
Crepil, *sb.* cripple. T⁴ 1458
Cryke, *sb.* creek. A 409
Crips, *adj.* crisp, curly. HF³ 206
Cristophere, *sb.* image of St. Christopher worn as an amulet. A 115
Croce, *sb.* cross, crozier. R 6470
Crois, *sb.* cross. ABC 60, A 699
Crop, *sb.* top, summit. T⁵ 25, A 1533
Cropan, *p.p.* crept. A 4259
Crossalet, *sb.* crucible, G 1117; **Crosletz**, *pl.* G 793
Croucho, *pres.* sign with the cross. A 3479
Crowke, *sb.* crock. A 4158

Crownet, *sb.* coronet. R 3203
Crulle, *adj. pl.* curly. A 81
Cucurbitas, *sb. pl.* flasks for distilling. G 794
Culpe, *sb.* guilt. I 336
Cure, *sb.* care, keeping. Bo. 227
Curlositee, *sb.* fastidiousness. I 829
Currouers, *sb. pl.* runners. HF³ 1038
Custommere, *adj.* accustomed. R 4936
Cut, *sb.* lot. A 835
Daf, *sb.* fool. A 4208
Daggyng, *sb.* slitting. I 418
Dagoun, *sb.* fragment. D 1751
Dayerye, *sb.* dairy. A 597
Dayesle, *sb.* daisy. L 182
Daliaunce, *sb.* pleasantry. A 211
Dampned, *p.p.* condemned. A 1175
Dan, *sb.* See **Daun**
Dare, *v.* daze. D 1204
Darketh, *pres.* hides. L 816
Darreyne, *v.* contest. A 1609
Daswed, *p.p.* dazed. HF² 151
Daun, *sb.* lord, sir. A 1379, B 3987
Daunce, *sb.* dance, game. A 476
Daunger, *sb.* influence, dominion. A 663, R 1470
Daungerous, *adj.* difficult, hard to please. A 517, B 2129
Daunten, *v.* subdue. Bo. 743
Dawes, *sb. pl.* days. F 1180, R 2833
Daweth, *pres.* dawns. A 1676
Dawing, *sb.* dawn. T³ 1466
Debate, *v.* do battle, oppose. B 2058, T⁴ 166
Debonairte, *sb.* meekness. Bl. 985
Debonerly, *adv.* gently. T² 1259
Decoped, *p.p.* slit. R 843
Ded, *p.p.* dead. A 942
Deduyt, *sb.* delight. A 2177
Deed, *p.p.* dead. See **Ded**
Deef, *adj.* deaf. A 446
Deel, *sb.* part, whit. A 415
Deemen, *v.* judge. B 3045
Deer, *sb.* wild animal
Deere, *adv.* dearly. A 3100
Deerelyng, *sb.* darling. A 3793
Deerne, *adj.* secret. A 3200
Dees, *sb. pl.* dice. T² 1347
Defaute, *sb.* default, defect. Bl. 5, I 182
Defende, *v.* (1) *imper.* defend, ABC 95; (2) **Defendeth**, forbids, B 2945; *p.p.* forbidden, B 475
Defet, *p.p.* enfeebled. T⁵ 618
Defetted, *p.p.* defeated. Bo. 261
Defusioun, *sb.* diffuseness. T³ 296
Degise, *adj.* fashionable. I 417
Degree, *sb.* rank, A 1168; *pl.* steps, A 1890
Deydest, *pres.* didst die. T³ 263
Deye, *sb.* dairy-woman. B 4036
Deyned, *pres.* deigned
Deynous, *adj.* bumptious. A 3941
Deys, *sb.* dais. A 370
Del, *sb.* part, whit
Delyces, *sb. pl.* delights. C 547
Delit, *sb.* pleasure. A 335
Delyvere, *adj.* active. A 84
Delyverly, *adv.* adroitly. B 4606
Delivernesse, *sb.* agility. I 452
Deme, *v.* judge, B 2219; **Demeth**, *imper.* A 1353
Demeyne, (1) *sb.* dominion, B 3855; (2) *v.* govern, HF² 451

- Demene**, *v.* endure. R 5238
Departe, *v.* distinguish. T³ 404; *pres. subj.* separate, A 1134; **Departed**, *p.p.* A 1621
Depeynted, *p.p.* depicted. A 2031
Depper, *adv. comp.* more deeply. B 630
Dere, *v.* harm. F 240, A 1822
Dereworth, **Derworth**, *adj.* precious. Bo. 281, 491
Derke, *sb. dat.* darkness. Bl. 608
Derre, *adv. comp.* more dearly. A 1448
Descensories, *sb. pl.* vessels for extracting oil. G 792
Desolaundre, *v.* slander. G 993
Descryve, *v.* describe. *See* **Discryve**
Desese, *v.* dispossess. R 2076
Desespaiied, *p.p.* despaired. *comp. to his Lady* 7
Deslavee, *adj.* unbridled. I 629
Desordeynne, *adj.* inordinate. I 818
Desordinat, *adj.* disorderly. I 415
Despense, *sb.* expenditure. A 1928
Despitous, *adj.* scornful. A 516
Desray, *sb.* disarray, confusion. I 927
Destynal, *adj.* fated. Bo. 1465
Destreyne, **Distreyne**, *v.* vex, constrain, grasp. F 820, A 1455, 1816, Bo. 513, PF 337
Determine, *v.* come to an end. T³ 379
Devyaunt, *adj.* divergent. R 4789
Devoided, *p.p.* banished. R 2929
Devoir, *sb.* duty. I 764
Dextre, *sb.* steed. B 2103
Dyapred, *p.p.* diapered. A 2158
Dych, *sb.* ditch. I 718
Diffense, *sb.* prohibition. R 1147
Dight, *p.p.* dressed. A 1041
Digne, *adj.* worthy. A 141; haughty, repellent. A 517, 3964; **Dignelich**, *adv.* haughtily. T² 1024
Dilatacioun, *sb.* enlargement. B 237
Disavaunce, *v.* hinder. T² 511
Disaventure, *sb.* mischance. T⁴ 741
Discheveles, *adj.* with hair loose. A 683
Disclaundred, *p.p.* slandered. I 1031
Disorden, *pres. pl.* disagree. Bo. 1495
Disoreven, **Discryven**, **Diskryve**, *v.* describe. R 4803, I 533, Bl. 915
Disoure, *v.* reveal. Bl. 548
Disfigurat, *adj.* deformed. PF 222
Disjoynt, *sb.* dilemma, disadvantage, danger. B 1601, A 2962, I 1631
Dismal, *sb.* evil day. Bl. 1205
Dispence, *sb.* expenditure. R 1144
Dispitouse, *adj.* spiteful. Bl. 623
Dispone, *imper.* dispose. T³ 300
Disponyth, *pres.* disposes. Bo. 1457
Disrewillye, *adv.* irregularly. R 4900
Dissert, *sb.* deserving. Bo. 1302
Diserved, *p.p.* deserved. A 1716
Disteyne, *v.* stain, obscure. I 255
Distinote, *v.* distinguish. R 6199
Distyngwed, *p.p.* distinguished. Bo. 439
Distoned, *p.p.* put out of tune. R 4248
Distreyne. *See* **Destreyne**
Disturne, *v.* turn aside. T³ 718
Dite, *sb.* song, poem, story. Bo. 1453, 602, 315
Divinistre, *sb.* diviner. A 2811
Divynailles, *sb. pl.* divinations. I 605
Divisioun, *sb.* difference. A 1780
Doande, *p. pres.* doing. R 2708
Doke, *sb.* duck, A 3576; *pl.* B 4580
Doked, *p.p.* cropped. A 590
Dolven, *p.p.* buried. Bl. 222
Dom, *sb.* judgment. PF 480
Domme, *adj.* dumb. R 2220
Donne, *adj.* dun. T² 908, PF 334
Doole, *sb.* portion. R 2364
Doole, *sb.* dolefulness. R 2956
Doom, *sb.* judgment. C 257
Dormant, *adj.* (of a table) fixed. A 353
Doucet, *sb.* a kind of flute. HF³ 132
Douteles, *adv.* doubtless
Doutes, *adj. pl.* dubious. Bo. 591
Doutous, *adj.* deceitful. Bo. 275
Dowe, *pres. s.* bestow. T⁵ 230
Dradde, *pret.* feared
Draf, *sb.* dregs, refuse. I 35, A 4207
Drasty, *adj.* worthless. B 2113
Drat, dreadeth. T³ 328
Draughte, *sb.* move at chess. Bl. 681
Drawe, *v.* move at chess. Bl. 681
Dreched, *p.p.* harassed. R 4077
Drechynghe, *sb.* delaying. I 1000, T³ 853
Dredeles, *adv.* undoubtedly. Bl. 763
Dredful, **Dredeful**, *adj.* (1) timorous, PF 195, A 1479; (2) terrible. B 3558
Dreinte, *pret.* drowned, Bl. 72; was drowned, B 923
Dreynt, *p.p.* drowned. A 3520
Drenchen, *v.* drown. B 455
Drenchyng, *sb.* drowning. A 2456
Dreihed, *sb.* dreariness. R 4728
Dresse, *v.* make ready. B 1100
Drye, *v.* endure, suffer. *Mars* 251, T⁵ 42, R 3105
Dryve, *p.p.* driven. F 1230
Drogges, *sb. pl.* drugs. A 426
Dronkelewe, *adj.* tipsy. C 495
Droppyng, *p. pres.* dripping. I 633
Drough, *pret.* drew. B 1710, F 965, T³ 978
Drovy, *adj.* turbid. I 816
Druery, *sb.* love, affection. R 844, 5063
Drugge, *v.* drudge. A 1416
Duo, *sb.* duke. A 860
Dulcarnon, *sb.* perplexity. *See* note, T³ 931
Dulle, *pres.* grow dull. R 4792
Dulve, *pret.* dug. Bo. 1639
Dure, *v.* endure, abide, live. F 166, A 1236
Comp. to his Lady 31
Durre-don, dare do. T⁵ 840
Durring-don, *sb.* daring. T⁵ 837
Duweliche, *adv.* duly. Bo. 190
Dwale, *sb.* sleeping draught. A 4161
Dwyned, *p.p.* dwindled. R 360
Ech, *adj.* each. A 39
Eche, *v.* eke, increase. T¹ 705, T⁵ 110
Eched, **Echid**, *p.p.* increased. T³ 1329, Bo. 749
Echynnys, *sb. pl.* sea-urchins. Bo. 798
Echon, each one
Eek, *adv.* also. A 41
Eem, **Em**, *sb.* uncle. T¹ 1022, T² 162
Eft, *adv.* again. A 1669
Eft-sones, *adv.* soon again. T² 1468
Egal, *adj.* equal. T³ 137, Bo. 575
Egalitee, **Egalyte**, *sb.* equality, equanimity. I 949, Bo. 395
Egaly, *adv.* equably. Bo. 398
Egge, *sb.* edge. T⁴ 927, *Former Age* 19
Eggement, *sb.* incitement. B 842
Egre, *adj.* sharp, bitter. Bo. 215, I 117, R 5475

- Egremoyne**, *sb.* agrimony. G 800
Egren, *v.* excite. Bo. 1530
Eyleth, *pres. s.* ails. A 1081
Elr, *sb.* air. A 1246
Eyre, *sb.* heir. L 2549
Eyrysh, *adj.* aerial. HF² 111
Eisel, *sb.* vinegar. R 217
Eythe, *adj.* easy. R 3955
Ek, *adv.* also. T⁸ 1510
Eldefather, *sb.* grandfather. Bo. 37
Elden, *v.* grow old. Bo. 528
Elengenesse, *sb.* wretchedness. R 7494
Ell, *adv.* else. R 1231, 2964
Ellebor, *sb.* hellebore. B 4154
Elles, *adv.* else. C 315
Elvysshe, *adj.* elf-like, abstracted. G 843
Em, *sb.* uncle. T² 162
Embawme, *v.* embalm. L 676
Embelif, *adj.* oblique. As. i. § 20
Embelysed, *p.p.* embellished. Bo. 439
Embossed, *p.p.* sheltered in the woods. Bl. 353
Embrouded, *p.p.* embroidered. A 89
Emerande, *sb.* emerald. PF 175
Emforth, *prep.* to the extent of, according to. T² 243, 997, A 2235
Emysperies, *sb. pl.* hemispheres. As. i. § 18
Empeyre, *pres.* impair. E 2198
Empireden, *pret. pl.* made worse. B 2205
Emplastre, *pres. pl.* plaster over, 'whitewash.' E 2297
Empleth, *pres. pl.* unfold. Bo. 1648
Emprise, *sb.* enterprise. G 605, Bl. 1092
Empte, *adj.* empty. G 741
Encens, *sb.* incense. A 2938
Enochoun, *sb.* occasion. B 2780
Enoombrous, *adj.* burdensome. HF² 354
Enorees, *sb.* increase. A 2184
Enoreesceden, *pret.* enlarged on. B 2466
Enoreessen, *pres. pl.* increase. A 1338
Endelong, *adv.* lengthways. A 1991
Endentynges, *sb.* scalloping. I 417
Endyte, *v.* write, compose. A 95, L 2356
Enforcest thee, *pres.* endeavour. Bo. 775
Engyn, *sb.* (1) wit, contrivance, G 339, T³ 274; (2) military machine, R 4194
Engynned, *p.p.* racked. B 4250
Engreggen, *pres. pl.* weigh upon. I 978
Engreveth, *pres.* grieves. R 3444
Enhabite, *pres.* dwell. R 6355
Enhaunced, *p.p.* elevated. As. ii. § 26
Enlaceth, *pres.* entangles. Bo. 97; **Enlaced**, *p.p.* Bo. 774
Enlumyned, *p.p.* illuminated. ABC 73
Enlutyng, *sb.* plastering with clay. G 766
Enoynt, *p.p.* anointed. A 199
Enseled, *p.p.* sealed up, confirmed. T⁵ 151, T⁴ 559
Entaille, *v.* carve, R 619, 3711; **Entailed**, *p.p.* R 140
Entayle, *sb.* shape, R 162; cutting, jaggings, R 1081
Entame, *v.* begin. ABC 79
Enteched, *p.p.* endowed with (good) qualities, T⁸ 832; infected, Bo. 1292
Entende, *pres. s.* perceive. T⁴ 1649
Entermete, *v.* interpose. R 2966
Entre, *sb.* entry. Bo. 266, 316
Entrechaungynges, *sb. pl.* interchange. Bo. 357
Entrecomunen, *v.* communicate. T⁴ 1354
Entredited, *p.p.* under an interdict. I 905
Entremedied, *p.p.* intermingled. Bo. 512
Entremes, *sb.* entremet, a between-course. PF 665
Entremete, *v.* interpose, interfere. D 834, B 2730, Bo. 1094, R 2966
Entriketh, *pres.* entangles. PF 403
Entunes, *sb. pl.* intonings. Bl. 309
Envenyme, *v.* poison. Bl. 640
Enviroun, *adv.* round about. R 4203
Envynned, *p.p.* supplied with wine. A 347
Envoluped, *p.p.* enveloped. C 942
Equipolences, *sb. pl.* equivalents. R 7076
Er, *adv. conj. prep.* before
Eroedecken, *sb.* archdeacon. A 655
Ere, *sb.* ear; **Erys**, *pl.* A 556
Ere, *v.* plough, A 886; **Ered**, *p.p.* HF¹ 485
Erke, *adj.* irked, weary. R 4867
Erme, *v.* grieve. Bl. 80, C 312
Ernes, *sb.* earnestness. R 4838
Ernestful, *adj.* serious. E 1175
Erraunt, *adj.* wandering. Bl. 660
Ere, *sb.* arse. A 3734
Eschaufede, *pret.* chafed. Bo. 211
Eschaufeth, *pres.* grows warm. Bo. 216
Eschaunges, *sb. pl.* exchanges. HF² 189
Eschew, **Eschu**, *adj.* unwilling. I 971, E 1812
Esed, *p.p.* entertained. A 29
Esoyne, *sb.* excuse for absence. I 164
Espleiten, *v.* perform. R 6174
Estat, *sb.* state. A 926
Estatlich, *adj.* stately. A 140
Estatutes, *sb. pl.* statutes. Bo. 269
Estres, *sb. pl.* inner parts of a house. A 1971, 4295, L 1715
Ethe, *adj.* easy. T⁵ 850
Evene, *adj.* average. A 82
Everich, *pron.* each. A 371
Everychon, each one. A 31
Everydel, every whit. A 368
Ew, *sb.* yew-tree. A 2923, PF 180
Exces, *sb.* excess, extravagance. T¹ 626
Expans, *adj.* separate. F 1275
Extre, *sb.* axle. As. i. § 14
Ey, *sb.* egg. B 4035
Facound, *sb.* eloquence. C 50, Bl. 925
Facound, *adj.* eloquent. PF 520
Fader, *sb. (gen.)* father's. R 781
Fadme, *sb.* fathom. A 2916, Bl. 422
Payle, *v.* make mistakes. R 4249
Fair, *adj.*; **A fair**, a good one, A 165, T⁸ 850
Faire, *adv.* fairly. A 94
Fairyre, *sb.* fairyland. E 95
Faldyng, *sb.* coarse cloth. A 391
Fallaces, *sb. pl.* fallacies. R 7077
Falle, *v.* happen
Falsen, *v.* falsify. A 3175
Falwe, *adj.* brown, yellow. HF³ 846
Falwes, *sb. pl.* fallows. D 656
Famulier, *adj.* familiar. A 215
Fan, *sb.* quintain. H 42
Fantastik, *adj.* imaginative. A 1376
Fantome, *sb.* fantasy. B 1037
Faroe, *imperat.* paint. R 2235
Fardeles, *sb. pl.* burdens. R 5583
Fare, *sb.* fuss, disturbance. A 3900, T⁸ 860
Fare, *v.* go, speed, behave
Fare, *p.p.* gone. F 1546
Fare-carte, *sb.* cart. T⁵ 1162

- Farsed**, *p.p.* stuffed. A 233
Fasoun, *sb.* fashion. R 708
Fauoon, *sb.* falcon. F 411
Fauooners, *sb. pl.* falconers. F 1196
Fawe, *adj.* fain. R 6477; *adv.* T⁴ 887
Pay, *sb.* faith. L 778, R 2887
Feeches, *sb. pl.* vetches. T³ 936
Feeld, *sb.* field. A 1522
Feendly, *adj.* fiendish. Bl. 593
Feffe, *v.* fee, present. T³ 901
Feffed in, *p.p.* invested with. E 1698
Feirs, *adj.* fierce. R 1482
Feyne, *v.* feign. A 735
Feyntise, *sb.* feigning. R 2947, 2098
Fel, *adj.* fierce. B 2019
Fel, *sb.* skin. T¹ 91
Felawe, *sb.* fellow. A 1525
Feldefare, *sb.* field-fare. PF 364, T³ 861
Felle, *adj.* many. E 917, Bo. 262, R 189
Felle, *adj. pl.* cruel. T¹ 470
Felliche, **Felly**, *adv.* cruelly. Bo. 355, R 3251
Felnesse, *sb.* herceness. Bo. 217
Femenye, *sb.* womankind. A 866
Femininitee, *sb.* womanhood, feminine appearance. B 360
Fend, *sb.* fiend. I 584
Fenix, *sb.* phoenix. Bl. 981
Fer, *adj.* and *adv.* far
Ferde, *sb. dat.* fear. Bl. 981, T¹ 557, I. 2332
Ferde, *pret.* fared, behaved. A 1372, 3606
Fere, *sb.* fellow, companion, L 969; *in fere*, I-fere, together
Ferforth, *adv.* far forward; **So ferforth**, **So ferforthly**, to such an extent. B 372, A 960
Ferfulleste, *adj. sup.* most timorous. T² 450
Ferly, *adj.* wonderful. A 4173
Fermacies, *sb. pl.* pharmacies, medicines. A 2713
Fermerer, *sb.* keeper of the infirmary. D 1859
Fermour, *sb.* farmer, contractor. L 378
Fern, *adv.* of long time. F 255
Ferne, *adj. pl.* ancient. A 14; **Ferne yere**, past years, T⁶ 1176
Ferre, *adv. co. up.* farther. A 47
Ferreeste, *adj. super.* farthest. A 494
Fers, *sb.* piece at chess. Bl. 653
Ferthe, *card. num.* fourth. B 823
Ferther, *adv.* further. A 36
Ferthyng, *sb.* morsel. A 134
Fesaunt, *sb.* pheasant. PF 357
Fest, *sb.* fist. C 802
Feste, *sb.* feast, festival. A 906
Festelynge, *p. pres.* feasting. F 345
Festyvally, *adv.* joyously. Bo. 560
Festne, *v.* fasten. A 195
Fet, *pret.* fetched. A 819
Fetys, *adj.* neat, graceful. A 157, C 478
Fetisly, *adv.* neatly, skilfully. A 273, A 124
Fiaunce, *sb.* confidence. R 5181
Fyochen, *v.* fix. Bo. 419
Fil, *pret.* fell. A 1034, Bl. 275
Fille, *v.* fell, cut down. A 1702
Fyn, *sb.* end. B 474, Mars 218
Finaliche, *adv.* finally. T³ 556
Fine, *v.* finish, cease, stop. T⁴ 26, T⁵ 776, T² 1460
Fynt, findeth
Fir, *sb.* fire. A 1502, 1246
Fisycien, *sb.* physician. Bo. 66
Fit, *sb.* stave, canto. B 2078
Fithels, *sb.* fiddle. A 296
Flayne, *p.p.* flayed. I 425
Flaumes, *sb. pl.* flames. ABC 89
Fleemeth, *pres.* chases away. H 182
Fleen, *sb. pl.* fleas. H 17
Fleen, *v.* flee. ABC 148
Fleete, *pres. s.* float. A 2397
Fleigh, *pret.* flew. T² 104
Flemed, *pret.* exiled, R 3052; *p.p.* exiled fugitive, G 58
Flemen, *v.* put to flight. T² 852
Flemere, *sb.* banisher. B 460
Fleteth, *pres. s.* floateth. B 901
Fletyng, *p. pres.* floating. A 1956
Flex, *sb.* flax. A 676
Flo, *sb.* dart. H 264
Flokmeels, *adv.* in a crowd. E 86
Flosteren, *pres. pl.* flutter, are tossed about. Bo. 1037
Flotery, *adj.* dishevelled. A 2883
Flourouns, *sb. pl.* flower-ornaments. I. 217
Floute, *sb.* flute. HF³ 133
Floytyng, *p. pres.* fluting. A 91
Fneseth, *pres. s.* snorts. H 62
Foynen, *pres. pl.* thrust. A 1654
Foyoun, *sb.* increase. A 3167
Foleyen, *v.* act foolishly. Bo. 644
Foly, *adv.* foolishly. Bl. 873
Folye, *adj.* foolish. I. 164
Folly, *adv.* foolishly. Mars 158, R 2603
Fonde, *v.* try, prove. B 347, T³ 1155
Fonge, *v.* take. B 377
Fonne, *sb.* fool. A 4089
Fonned, *p.p.* fooled. R 5367
Foor, *sb.* course. D 1935
Foot-hoot, *adv.* in haste. B 418
For, as an intensive prefix. **For-blak**, A 2144; **For-dronk**, **For-dry**, **For-old**, A 2142; **For-pampered**, *Former* .1ge 5, etc.; very black, very drunk, very dry, very old, very pampered, etc.
For, *conj.* because. T¹ 802
For, *prep.* in fear of, T¹ 748, T² 194, 868; against, T¹ 928
For al, notwithstanding. T⁴ 55 note
Forbede, **Forbode**, *pres. subj.* forbid. I. 10
Forbise, *v.* exemplify. T² 1390
For-brak, *pret.* interrupted. Bo. 1143
Forby, *adv.* by, past. A 175
For-cracchen, *v.* scratch. R 323
For-do, *v.* destroy. T¹ 238
For-do, **For-done**, *p.p.* destroyed, ruined. T¹ 74, R 4339
For-dreda, *sb.* fear. B 2383
For-dryve, *p.p.* driven astray. A 3782
For-dwyned, *p.p.* wasted. R 366
Foreyn, *sb.* outer room. L 1962
Foreyne, *adj.* foreign, external, public. Bo. 680, 755
For-fare, *v.* fare ill. R 5778
Forheed, **Forheved**, *sb.* forehead. G 583, Bo. 132
Forlete, *v.* resign, forgo, forsake, B 1848, C 864, I 720; **Forleten**, *p.p.* forsaken, HF² 186
Forloyn, *sb.* note on horn recalling hounds when at fault. Bl. 386
Forlyved, *p.p.* decrepit. Bo. 763
Forlyven, *p.p.* degenerate. Bo. 758
Forme, *adj.* first. B 2290
Formel, *sb.* any hen-bird of prey. PF 371
Formest, *adj.* foremost. Bl. 889

Fornocast, *p.p.* planned. I 448
Forneys, *sb.* furnace. A 559
For-pyned, *p.p.* tormented. A 205
Fors, *sb.* force; no fors, no matter. B 285
For-shapen, *p.p.* misshapen. T² 66
For-shright, *p.p.* tired with shrieking. T⁴ 1147
For-sleweth, *pres.* is over-slothful. I 685
Forslewthen, *v.* over-tarry. B 4286
For-sluggeth, *pres.* is over-sluggish. I 685
For-songen, *p.p.* exhausted with singing. R 664
Forster, *sb.* forester. A 120
For-straight, *p.p.* exhausted. B 1295
For-thenke, **For-thinke**, *v.* repent. R 3957, T² 1414
For-thy, *adv.* therefore. Bo. 375
Forthren, *v.* further, help. A 1137
Forth-right, *adv.* directly. E 1503
Fortunen, *v.* presage. A 417
Fortunous, *adj.* fortuitous. Bo. 224
For-waked, *p.p.* tired with watching. B 596, Bl. 126
Forwanded, *p.p.* tired with wandering. R 3336
Forward, *sb.* agreement. A 33
Forwelked, *p.p.* withered. R 361
For-weped, *p.p.* exhausted with weeping. Bl. 126
For-wered, *p.p.* worn out. R 235
Forwes, *sb. pl.* furrows. *Former Age* 12
For-why, *conj.* because. T² 12
Forwityng, *sb.* foreknowledge. B 4433
Forwot, *pret.* foreknew. HF¹ 45
Foryaf, *pret.* forgave, respited. T³ 1577
Foryede, *pret.* forwent, desisted from. T² 1330
Foryelde, *v.* repay. E 831
Foryete, *v.* forget. Bl. 1124
Foryive, *pres.* forgive. B 1615
Fother, *sb.* cartload. A 530
Foudre, *sb.* lightning. HF¹ 335
Foules, *sb. pl.* fowls, birds. PF 203
Founds. See **Fonds**.
Foundred, *pret.* fell. A 2687
Founes, *sb. pl.* fawns. Bl. 429
Frayneth, *pres. s.* asks. B 1790
Frakenes, *sb. pl.* freckles. A 2169
Frape, *sb.* company. T³ 410
Freel, *adj.* frail. Bo. 889
Freeten, *pres. pl.* eat. A 2068
Freyned, *pret.* prayed. B 3070
Frelste, *sb.* frailty. I 449
Fremde, *adj.* foreign. F 429
Fret, *sb.* ornament. I 215
Frete, *v.* eat, B 3294; *p.p.* eaten, B 475
Frotheth, *pres. s.* rubs. A 3747
Frounce, *sb.* wrinkle. Bo. 61
Frounced, *p.p.* wrinkled. R 365, 3137
Frounceles, *adj.* unwrinkled. R 850
Fruftereres, *sb. pl.* fruit-women. C 478
Fumeter, *sb.* the herb fumitory. B 4153
Fumositee, *sb.* headiness, vapouriness. C 567, F 358
Furial, *adj.* raging. F 443
Furlong-vey, short space. L 841
Further-over, *adv.* furthermore. T⁴ 1027
Gabbe, *v.* talk idly, gossip. A 3510, Bl. 1074, T³ 301
Gadelyng, *sb.* vagabond. R 938
Gadrede, *pret.* gathered. A 824
Gayl, *sb.* gaol. R 4745
Gayler, *sb.* gaoler. A 1064

Gaillard, **Gaylard**, *adj.* gay, merry. A 4367, 3336
Gayneth, *pres. s.* availeth. A 1787
Gaitrys beryis, *sb.* pl. berries of the dog-wood tree. B 4155
Galauntyne, **Galentyne**, *sb.* a kind of sauce. *Rosam.* 17, *Former Age* 16
Galaxye, *sb.* the Milky Way. PF 56
Gale, *v.* cry out. D 832
Galyngale, *sb.* sweet cypress root. A 381
Galoche, *sb.* patten, high shoe. F 555
Galpyng, *adj.* gaping. F 350
Galwes, *sb. pl.* gallows. B 3941
Gan, *pret.* began, did, used to. A 301
Ganeth, *pres. s.* yawns.
Gargat, *sb.* throat. B 4525
Garisoun, *v.* cure. R 3249
Garnisoun, *sb.* garrison. B 2215
Gas, *goes*. A 4037
Gastnes, *sb.* terror. Bo. 728
Gat-tothed, *adj.* goat-toothed, lascivious. A 468
Gauded, *p.p.* dyed. A 159
Gauren, *v.* gaze. A 3827
Gaureth, *pres. s.* stares. B 3559
Gawdes, *sb. pl.* toys, fineries. I 651
Geaunt, *sb.* giant. B 1997
Geere, **Gere**, *sb.* (1) clothing, accoutrement, A 365, 1016; (2) behaviour, manners, A 1372, 1531
Geery, *adj.* changeable. A 1536
Geestes, *sb. pl.* stories. F 211
Geyn, *sb.* gain. An. 206
Goldenhalle, *sb.* guild-hall. A 370
Gent, *adj.* gentle, courteous. B 1925, PF 558
Gentrie, *sb.* gentle birth, nobility. I 452
Geomancie, *sb.* divination by figures made on the earth. I 605
Gerdon, **Gerdoun**, *sb.* reward; **For alle gerdons**, at all costs. B 2240
Gerdoned, *p.p.* rewarded. B 2160
Gere, *sb.* See **Geere**
Gere, *sb.* changeableness. Bl. 1256
Gereful, **Gerful**, *adj.* changeable. A 1538, T⁴ 286
Gesse, *pres. s.* guess. A 82
Geste, *sb.* guest, stranger. I 1158
Geste, *sb.* romance, story. B 2123, T³ 450
Gestlours, *sb. pl.* reciters. HF³ 108
Get, *sb.* contrivance. C 1277
Gye, *v.* guide. A 1950, F 75, An. 0
Gif, *conj.* if. Bl. 224
Giggis, *sb. pl.* fiddles. HF³ 852
Giggyng, *p. pres.* strapping. A 2504
Giltelless, *adj.* guiltless. B 1062
Gyn, **Gynne**, *sb.* engine, contrivance. F 128, R 4176
Gynne, *v.* begin
Gypon, *sb.* short vest. A 75
Gipsier, *sb.* pouch. A 357
Girden, *v.* strike. B 3736
Girles, *sb. pl.* youths. A 664
Gysarme, *sb.* halberd. R 5978
Gise, *sb.* fashion. A 663
Gyser, *sb.* gizzard. Bo. 1132
Gyte, *sb.* some part of a woman's dress, A 3954; *pl.* D 559
Gludere, *sb.* one who makes glad. A 2223
Glareth, *pres. s.* shines. HF¹ 272
Glase, *v.* glaze. T³ 469. See **Howvo**

Gledy, *adj.* fiery. L 105
Gleyre, *sb.* white of egg. G 506
Gliente, *pret.* glanced. T⁴ 1223
Glew, *v.* glue, fasten. HF³ 671
Glymsyng, *sb.* glimmering. L 238;
Glood, *pret.* glided. F 393
Glose, *sb.* gloss, comment. L 328, Bl. 333
Glose, *v.* flatter. B 3330; expound. B 1180
Glowmbe, *v.* frown. R 4356
Gnodde, *pret.* rubbed, crushed. *Former lge* 11
Gnof, *sb.* churl. A 3188
Gobet, *sb.* shred. A 696
Godsibbes, *sb. pl.* godparents. I 908
Goldlees, *adj.* without gold. B 1480
Golee, *sb.* mouthful. PF 556
Gollardeys, *sb.* ribald. A 560
Gonfenoun, **Gounfanoun**, *sb.* pennon, banner. R 2018, 1201
Gonge, *sb.* privy. I 885
Gonne, *pret.* began. A 1658; **Gonnen**, *pl.* l. 148
Good, *sb.* goods, property. A 581
Gooldes, *sb. pl.* marigolds. A 1929
Goore, *sb.* gusset. A 1237; **Under my goore**, at my side, B 1079
Goosish, *adj.* foolish. T² 584
Goost, **Gost**, *sb.* spirit. A 2703, T⁴ 187
Goter, *sb.* gutter. Ro. 689, T² 787, L 2705
Governeresse, *sb. fem.* governess. *Pite* 80
Grayn, *sb.* dye. B 1917
Grame, *sb.* harm, anger. G 1403, An. 276, T³ 1028
Grange, *sb.* farm, granary. A 3668; **Graunges**, *pl.* B 1256, HF² 100
Graspe, *v.* grope. T⁵ 223
Graunt, *sb.* decree. A 1306
Graven, *p. p.* buried. L 735
Gre, **Gree**, (1) pleasure, favour, F. 1151; (2) superiority, pre-eminence, A 2733
Grehoundes, *sb. pl.* greyhounds. A 191
Greithen, *v.* prepare, make ready, A 4109; *pres.* *pl.* B 3784
Greythed, *p. p.* prepared. Ro. 161
Grenhede, *sb.* immaturity. B 163
Gres, *sb.* grass, T² 515; **Greses**, *pl.* grasses, HF³ 263
Grete, *sb.*; **The grete**, the sum, Bl. 1241
Grete See, *sb.* the Mediterranean. A 59, R 2748
Greve, *sb.* grove, B 4013; *pl.* A 1495
Greven, *p. p.* graven, engraved. R 4799
Grifphon, *sb.* griffin. A 2133
Gryl, *adj.* rough. R 73
Grynt, grindeth. HF³ 708
Grynte, *pret.* gnashed. D 2161
Grys, *adj.* grey. G 559
Grys, *sb.* grey fur. A 104
Grislich, *adj.* grisly. T² 1700
Groff, *adv.* prone, face downwards. R 2561
Groynyng, *sb.* groaning. A 2460
Gromes, *sb. pl.* men. R 200
Grope, *v.* probe, try. A 644, D 1817
Gruochen, *pres. pl.* grumble. A 3058
Gruf, *adv.* prone, face downwards. A 949, B 1865
Gunne, *pret. pl.* began. PF 257
Ha, *v.* have. R 4657
Haaf, *pret.* heaved. A 3470
Habergeon, *sb.* coat of mail. A 76
Habitacle, *sb.* habitation. Bo. 540
Hacches, *sb. pl.* hatches. L 648
Haf, **Haaf**, *pret.* heaved. A 2428, 3470

Hay, *sb.* hedge, R 2987; **Hayis**, *pl.* T³ 351
Haynselyns, *sb. pl.* smocks. I 422
Haire, *sb.* hair-shirt. G 133, R 438
Haleth, *pres. s.* draws. ABC 68
Halfe, *sb.*; **On my halfe**, on my part, Bl. 139
Halke, *sb.* corner. L 1780
Hals, *sb.* neck. B 73
Halse, *pres. s.* conjure. B 1835
Halt, *pres. s.* (1) holdeth, performs, B 721, Bl. 620; (2) halteth, limps, Bl. 621
Halten, *v.* limp. T⁴ 1457
Halvendel, *adv.* half. T³ 707
Halwed, *p. p.* accounted holy. T³ 268
Halwes, *sb. pl.* saints, shrines. Bl. 830, A 14, D 657
Halydayes, *sb. pl.* holidays, festivals. L 422
Hameled, *p. p.* mutilated, cut off. T² 964
Hande-brede, *sb.* hand-breadth. A 3811
Hard, *adj.*; **Of hard**, with difficulty, T² 1236
Hardement, *sb.* hardihood. R 3392
Hardily, *adv.* surely. A 126
Harlot, *sb.* rascal. A 647, D 1754
Harneys, *sb.* armour. A 1006
Harnesled, *p. p.* equipped. A 114
Harre, *sb.* hinge. A 550
Harwed, *p. p.* harrowed, devastated. A 3512, D 2107
Hasardrye, *sb.* gambling. C 590
Hasel-wodes, *sb. pl.* hazel woods (haselwodes shaken), 'Queen Anne is dead.' T³ 890, T⁵ 1174
Hatte, *v.* be called. R 38, T³ 798
Hatter, *adv.* more hotly. R 2475
Haubergeon, *sb.* hauberk. A 2119
Haunt, *sb.* practice. A 447
Hauntoun, *pres. pl.* practise. I 780
Hauteyn, *adj.* haughty. C 330
Havoire, *v.* to have. R 4720
Hawe, *sb.* hedge. C 855
Hawebake, *sb.* baked haws, *i.e.* poor stuff. B 95
Hawteyn, *adj.* haughty, high-flying. R 3739, L 1120
Hed, *p. p.* hidden. L 208
Hede, *v.* put a head on. T² 1042
Heele, *sb.* health. B 1540
Heeng, *pret.* hung. A 676
Heer, *sb.* hair. A 589
Heerde, *sb.* herdsman. R 6453
Heer-mele, *sb.* hair's-breadth. As. ii. § 38
Heete, *pres. subj.* promise. A 2398
Heete, *pret.* was named. Bl. 200
Hey, *sb.* hedge. H 14
Heye, *v.* rise. Ro. 875
Heyly, *adv.* highly, urgently. T² 1733
Heyne, *sb.* villain. G 1319
Heyre, *sb.* heir. Bl. 168
Heyres, *sb. pl.* hair-shirts. I 105
Heysugge, *sb.* hedge-sparrow. PF 612
Heythen, *adv.* hence. A 4033
Hele, *sb.* See **Heele**
Hele, *v.* hide conceal. B 2275, D 950
Heled, *p. p.* hidden. B 4245
Heleles, *adj.* without health. T⁶ 1593
Helply, *adj.* helpful. T⁵ 128
Hende, *adj.* prompt, polite, gracious. D 1286, 628, A 3199
Heng, *pret.* hung. Bl. 122
Henne, *adv.* hence. A 2356
Hennesforth, *adv.* henceforth. T³ 167

Hente, *pret.* seized. B 4525
Henteres, *sb. pl.* seizers. Bo. 91
Hepe, *sb.* hip. B 1937
Herandes, *sb. pl.* heralds. A 2672
Herbelours, *sb. pl.* receivers of guests. R 5000
Herber, *sb.* labour. L 203
Herbergage, *sb.* lodging. A 4329, B 147
Herbergeours, *sb. pl.* harbingers. B 097
Her-biforn, *adv.* beforehand. L 73
Herd, *p.p.* haired. A 2518
Herde, *sb.* herdsman. T³ 1235
Herde-gromes, *sb. pl.* herdsmen. HF³ 146
Herdessa, *sb. f.m.* herdsman. T¹ 653
Herdis, *sb.* refuse of flax. R 1233
Here and houn, one and all (?). T⁴ 210
Herieth, *pres. s.* praises. B 1808; **Heryest**,
 praisest, B 3419; **Heryed**, *p.p.* praised, B
 872; **Herynge**, *p. pres.* praising, B 1649
Herys, *sb. pl.* hairs. A 555
Herne, *sb.* corner. F 1121
Heroner, *sb.* heron-killer. T⁴ 413; L 1120
Heronsewes, *sb. pl.* young herons. F 68
Hert, *sb.* hart. A 1689
Herte, *pret.* hurt. Bl. 882
Herte, *sb.* heart. A 954
Hertely, *adj.* heartfelt. Bl. 85
Herte-pon, *sb.* breast-bone. A 2606
Hete, *pret.* was called. Bl. 947
Heterly, *adv.* fiercely. L 638
Hethyng, *sb.* mockery. A 4110
Heve, *v.* heave. A 550
Hevedes, *sb. pl.* heads. B 2032
Hevenysh, *adj.* heavenly. Mars 30
Hevenyssly, *adv.* celestially. A 1055
Hewe, *sb.* colour. An. 147
Hewe, *sb.* domestic servant. E 1785
Hye, *v.* hasten, F 291; **Hy**, *imperat.* Bl. 152
Hyene, *sb.* hyena. Fortune 35
Hierde, *sb.* herdsman, A 603; **Hierdes**, *pl.*
 T³ 619
Hight, *p.p.* promised. A 2472
Highte, *sb.*; **On highte**, aloud. A 1784
Highteth, *pres. s.* adorns. Bo. 45
Hyne, *sb.* servant. A 603; C 688
Hir, (1) her, *pers. pron.* B 621; (2) her, *poss.*
pron. B 625; (3) their, *poss. pron.* A 365; (4)
 of them, *gen. pers. pron.* A 586
Hit, *pron. it.* Bl. 18
Hit, *hideth*. F 512
Hoker, *sb.* mockery. A 3965
Hokerly, *adv.* scornfully. I 581
Holour, *sb.* lecher. D 524
Holsom, *adj.* wholesome. PF 206
Honerous, *adj.* onerous, burdensome. R 5633
Honestee, *sb.* purity. C 89
Hoodles, *adj.* without hood. Bl. 1027
Hool, *adj.* whole. G 111, Bl. 552
Hoold, *sb.* a stronghold. B 507
Hooly, *adv.* wholly. A 599, Bl. 15
Hoors, *adj.* hoarse. T⁴ 1147
Hoot, *adj.* hot. A 420
Hoppeteres, *sb. pl.* dancers. A 2017
Hord, *sb.* hoard, plenty. Truth 3
Hors, **Hoors**, *adj.* hoarse. Bl. 347, T⁴ 1147
Horwe, *adj.* filthy. Mars 206
Hostiler, *sb.* innkeeper. A 241
Hote, *v.* promise, R 3385; **Hoten**, *be called*,
 D 144
Hottes, *sb. pl.* baskets. HF³ 850
Houndfysch, *sb.* shark. E 1825

Houres, *sb. pl.* (astrological) hours. A 416
Housel, *sb.* the Eucharist. R 6386
Housed, *p.p.* having received the Eucharist.
 I 1027
Hoved, *pret.* waited, T³ 33; **Hoveth**, *pres.*
Balance that C. made 15 (emend.)
How, *adv.* however. R 6489
Howve, *sb.* cap, 'sette his howve', A 3911;
 'make him an howve above a calle', T³ 775;
 'glave his howve', T⁵ 460, all phrases for 'to
 befool.' See also **Cappe**
Hulstred, *p.p.* concealed. R 6146
Humblesse, *sb.* humility. B 1660
Hunte, *sb.* hunter, A 1678; **Huntes**, *pl.* Bl. 549
Hurtlen, *v.* attack. Bo. 266
Hust, *p.p.* hushed. A 2981, T³ 1094
Hwed, *p.p.* hued, coloured. R 3011

I, y-, *prefix of past participles*
Ich, *pron. I.* T³ 282
Iohe, *adj.* each. Bo. 1812
I-tychid, *p.p.* fixed. Bo. 147;
Ik, *pron. I.* A 3867
Il-hayl, ill-luck to you. A 4089
Ilike, *adj.* same
Imperie, *sb.* imperium, official dignity. Bo. 487
Impetron, *pres. pl.* obtain. Bo. 172;
Importable, **Importable**, *adj.* unbearable. B
 3792, E 1144
In, *sb.* inn. B 1632
Infance, *sb.* infancy. R 5006
Infect, *p.p.* invalidated. A 320
Infortunat, *adj.* unfortunate. B 322
In-hielde, *pres. pl.* infuse. T³ 44
Injure, *sb.* injury. T³ 1018
In-knette, *pret.* confined. T³ 1088
Inned, *p.p.* housed. A 2192
In-set, *p.p.* implanted. Bo. 330
In-thringe, *v.* press in. T⁴ 66
Intresse, *sb.* interest. Truth 71
In-with, *prep.* within
Irous, *adj.* passionate. D 2086
I-shad, *p.p.* shed. Bo. 481
Isse, *v.* issue. R 1992
I-thrungen, *p.p.* pressed. Bo. 538

Jagounces, *sb. pl.* jacinths. R 1117
Jakke of Dover. See note, A 4347
Jambeux, *sb. pl.* leggings. B 2065
Jane, *sb.* small Genoese coin. B 1925, E 999
Janglere, *sb.* prater. A 560
Janglynge, *sb.* chattering, talking idly. I 649
Jape, *sb.* trick, jest. B 1629
Japeres, *sb. pl.* jesters. I 651
Jape-worthi, *adj.* burlesque. Bo. 1707
Jaunye, *sb.* jaundice. R 305
Jet, *sb.* fashion. A 682
Jeopardyes, *sb. pl.* problems. Bl. 665
Jewerye, *sb.* Jews' quarter. B 1679
Jo, *v.* come about. T³ 33
Jogelours, *sb. pl.* jugglers. HF³ 169
Joynant, *adj.* adjoining. A 1060
Joyn, *v.* enjoin. R 2355
Jolitee, *sb.* jolliness. A 680
Jompre, *imp. s.* jumble. T² 1037
Jouken, *v.* repose. T⁵ 409 (*note*)
Journe, *sb.* day's work. R 579
Jowes, *sb. pl.* jaws. HF³ 696
Jubbe, *sb.* jug. A 3628
Juge, *sb.* judge. A 1712

Jupartie, *sb.* jeopardy. F 1495, R 2666
Jurdones, *sb. pl.* chamber-pots. C 305
Justice, *sb.* punishment. R 2077
Juwise, **Juyse**, *sb.* judgment. A 1739, B 795
Kaynard, *sb.* coward. D 235
Kalenderes, *sb. pl.* calendars in illuminated prayer-books. ABC 70
Kalendes, *sb. pl.* calends, the first or beginning. T³ 1634
Kamelyne, *sb.* camel's hair. R 7365
Kamuse, *adj.* flat-nosed. A 3974
Kan, *v.* know, be able. A 371
Karole, *sb.* singing dance. R 744
Keeche, *v.* catch. T³ 1375
Kebhyl, *sb.* cake. D 1747
Keen, *sb.* kine. B 4021
Keepe, *sb.* heed. A 503
Kempe, *adj.* shaggy. A 2134
Kenned, *p. p.* known. Bl. 786
Kepe, *v.* care, reck. A 238, 1593
Kepte, *pres.* observed. A 415
Kernels, *sb. pl.* R 4197
Kers, *sb.* curse. A 3756
Kervere, *sb.* taver. A 1809
Kesse, *v.* kiss. E 1057
Kevere, *v.* recover. T¹ 917
Kevered, *p. p.* covered. PF 271, HF¹ 275
Kid, *p. p.* known. L 1028, E 1943
Kidde, *pres.* showed. T¹ 208
Kiked, *pres.* peeped. A 3445
Kymelyn, *sb.* brewing-tub. A 3518
Kynde, *sb.* nature. A 2451
Kirked, *p. p.* See note, R 3167
Kirke, *v.* show, B 635; **Kytheth**, *pres.* L 504
Kitte, *pres.* cut. B 600
Knarre, *sb.* knot. A 549
Knarry, *a. v.* gnarled. A 1977
Knave, *sb.* boy, servant. A 3431
Knopped, *p. p.* knobbed. R 7258
Knoppes, *sb. pl.* buds. R 1675
Knottles, *adj.* like an unknotted string. T⁵ 769
Knowe, *sb.* knee, T² 1202; **Knowes**, *pl.* B 1719
Konnyng, *sb.* ability. B 1099
Koude, *pres.* knew. A 110
Kowthe, *p. p.* renowned. A 14
Laas, *sb.* cord, snare. A 392, 1817
Labbe, *sb.* tell-tale, blabber. A 3509, T² 300
Label, *sb.* a kind of ruler. As. i. § 20
Lacche, *sb.* snare. R 1624
Lace, *sb.* net. R 2792
Lacerte, *sb.* muscle. A 2753
Lache, *adj.* lazy. Bo. 1309
Lachesse, *sb.* negligence. I 720
Lad, *p. p.* led. A 2620
Ladde, *pres.* took. B 1324
Lafte, *pres.* left, ceased. A 492
Laghyng, *p. pres.* laughing. B 632
Lay, *sb.* creed. F 18
Layneres, *sb. pl.* straps. A 2504
Lake, *sb.* linen cloth. B 2048
Lakken, *v.* depreciate. T¹ 189
Lamblish, *adj.* lamblike. *Former Age* 50
Lambren, *sb. pl.* lambs. R 7014
Lampe, *sb.* a thin plate. G 764
Lapidaire, *sb.* treatise on precious stones. HF³ 262
Lappe, *sb.* lap, border. G 12

Large, *adj.* liberal, extravagant. B 3489, 1621
Las, *adv. comp.* less. Bl. 674
Las, **Laas**, *sb.* snare. A 1951, 1817
Last, *pres.* lasteth, reaches. E 266
Last, *sb.* load. B 1628
Late, *adv.* lately. A 690
Latén, *v.* let. L 3007
Laterede, *adj.* slow. I 718
Lathe, *sb.* stable, barn. A 4088, HF³ 1050
Latis, *sb.* lattice. T² 615
Latoun, *sb.* brass. A 699, B 2067
Laudes, *sb. pl.* (1) the service said between midnight and 6 A.M.; (2) praises. HF³ 232
Launcegay, *sb.* kind of lance. B 1942
Launde, *sb.* clearing in the wood. A 1691, PF 302
Laurer, *sb.* laurel. A 1027
Laus, *adj.* loose. A 4064; **Lause**, *pl.* Bo. 417
Laven, *v.* exhaust. Bo. 1446
Lavenders, *sb.* washerwoman. L 358
Lavyd, *p. p.* poured out, drawn. Bo. 1127
Lawe, *adj.* low. R 5046
Lazar, *sb.* leper. A 242
Leche, *sb.* physician. R 2944
Leden, *sb.* language. F 435
Lead, *sb.* leaden vessel. A 202
Leaf, *adj.* dear. Bl. 8
Leaf, *sb.* leaf. E 1211
Leafful, *adj.* lawfull. I 41
Leafsel, *sb.* bowcr. I 411
Leepe, *pres.* leapt. A 2687
Leere, **Lere**, *v.* learn, teach. B 181, 630
Leere, *sb.* skin. B 2047
Lees, *sb.* net, leash. G 19, I 387
Lees, *pres.* lost. L 945
Lees, *adj.* false. R 8
Leet, *pres.* (1) let, A 175; (2) caused, B 1810, (3) left, A 508
Leeve, *pres. s.* believe. G 213
Leeve, *adj.* dear. G 257
Leif, *imper.* leave. T⁴ 896
Lefte, *pres.* delayed. R 4093
Legge, *v.* (1) lay, A 3937; (2) relieve, R 5016
Leye, *v.* wager, assert. T³ 1658
Leygheth, *pres.* laughs. Bo. 294
Leigh, *pres.* lied. T² 1077
Leyser, *sb.* leisure. Bl. 172
Leyt, *sb.* flame, lightning. I 839, Bo. 94
Leke, *sb.* leak. R 4830
Lemaille, *sb.* filing, thin plate. G 1162
Lemes, *sb. pl.* (1) gleams, flashes, B 4120, R 5346; (2) limbs, A 3886
Lemman, *sb.* sweetheart. A 3278
Lendes, *sb. pl.* loins. A 1237
Lene, *v.* lend. A 611
Lenger, *adv. comp.* longer
Leoun, *sb.* lion. B 3106
Lepande, *p. pres.* leaping. R 1928
Lere, **Leere**, *v.* teach, learn. B 630, 181
Les, *sb.* lie. L 1022
Lese, *v.* lose; **Leseth**, B 19
Lesyng, *sb.* lie. G 479
Lest, *sb.* pleasure. A 132, Bl. 907
Leste, *pres.* it pleased. A 750
Lette, *sb.* hindrance, delay. T³ 235
Letten, *v.* (1) hinder, A 889, B 2116; (2) forgo, A 1317, B 4274
Lette-game, *sb.* spoil-sport. T³ 527
Letterure, **Lettrure**, *sb.* literature. G 846, B 3486

GLOSSARY

Letuarie, *sb.* electuary, remedy, C 307, T³ 741;
Letuaries, *pl.* A 426
Leve, *sb.* permission. T³ 622
Leveful, *adj.* lawful. A 3912
Leven, *v.* believe. B 1181
Levere, *adj. comp.* pleasanter to. A 293
Lewesell, *sb.* leafy bower. A 4061
Lewed, *adj.* ignorant. A 502
Lewednesse, *sb.* stupidity. A 502
Lyard, *adj.* grey. D 1563
Lybardes, *sb. pl.* leopards. R 871
Libel, *sb.* bill of complaint. D 1595
Lyche-wake, *sb.* corpse-watch. A 2958
Lief, *sb.* darling. B 3084
Lifhode, *sb.* livelihood. I 685, R 5602
Lifty, *adv.* lively, life-like. A 2087
Liggen, *pres. pl.* lie. A 2205
Lyghter, *adv.* more lightly. L 410
Ligne-aloes, *sb.* aloes-wood. T¹ 1137
Liken, *v.* please. T¹ 431
Likerous, *adj.* lustful. C 540
Liltynge, *p. pres.* playing a lilt. HF³ 133
Lymaille, *sb.* filings. G 853
Lymeres, *sb. pl.* bounds in leash. Bl. 362
Lymerod, *sb.* lime-twigg. B 3754
Lymytour, *sb.* licensed beggar. A 209
Lynde, *sb.* lime-tree. A 2922, E 1211
Lipsed, *pret.* lisped. A 264
Lisse, *sb.* relief, comfort. Bl. 1039, F 1238
Lisse, *v.* relieve, Bl. 210; **Lissed**, *p. p.* F 1170
Lyst, *sb.* edge. D 634
Listow, *liet* thou. H 276
Lytarge, *sb.* white lead. A 620, G 775
Lytargey, *sb.* lethargy. Bo. 57, T¹ 730
Lyte, *adj.* little, B 2153; **A lite**, a little, B 713
Litesterre, *sb.* dycr. *Former Age* 17
Lith, *pres.* lies. A 1795
Lith, *sb.* limb. B 4065, Bl. 952
Lythe, *adj.* smooth, easy. HF¹ 118, R 3762
Lithe, *v.* soften. T⁴ 740
Litherly, *adv.* badly. A 3299
Lyves, *adj.* living. A 2395
Lixt, *liet*. D 1618
Lodemenage, *sb.* pilotage. A 403
Lodesmen, *sb. pl.* pilots. I. 1488
Loligne, *sb.* tether. R 3882
Longes, *sb. pl.* lungs. A 2752
Longeth, *pres.* belongs to. G 710
Loodesterre, *sb.* loadstar. A 2059
Loone, *sb.* loan. D 1661
Loos, *sb.* report, fame, praise. HF³ 530, B 3035
Looth, *adj.* hateful to. A 486
Loppe, *sb.* spider. As. i. § 19
Lopwebbe, *sb.* spider's web. As. i. § 21
Lore, *p. p.* lost. Bl. 1134
Lorel, *sb.* rascal. D 273, Bo. 178
Los, *sb.* praise, fame. L 1424, 1514
Losengeour, *sb.* flatterer. B 4516, L 352
Losengerie, *sb.* flattery, false praise. I 013
Losenges, *sb. pl.* lozenges. HF³ 227
Loteby, *sb.* paramour. R 6339
Lotynge, *p. pres.* lurking. G 186
Lough, *adj.* low. A 817
Lovedayes, *sb. pl.* days for settling disputes. A 258
Love-drury, *sb.* courtship. B 2085
Lous, *adj.* at large. H¹ 196
Loute, *v.* bow, T³ 681; **Loutode**, *pret.* R 1554
Lowke, *sb.* fellow-rascal. A 4415

Lownteth, *pres. s.* bows. B 2375
Lufsom, *adj.* lovable. T³ 465
Lunarie, *sb.* moonwort. G 800
Lust, *sb.* pleasure. A 192, T¹ 326
M, before a verb beginning with a vowel, *pers. pron. me.*
Maad, *p. p.* made. A 394
Maat, *adj.* dejected, discomfited. A 955, B 935
Madde, *v.* go mad. *Mars* 253
May, *sb.* maiden. B 851
Maydenhede, *sb.* virginity. B 30
Mayme, *sb.* manning. I 625
Maysondewe, *sb.* hospital. R 5619
Maystow, *mayst* thou. A 1018
Maistre, *sb.* master; *adj.* chief. I. 1016
Maystre, chief; **Maystre-strete**, **Maister-toun**. L 1965, 1591
Maistrye, *sb.* mastery. L 400
Make, *sb.* husband, mate, match. D 85, B 1982, A 2556
Maked, *pret.* made. A 1007
Makeles, *adj.* matchless. T¹ 172
Makyng, *sb.* poetry. L 74
Malapert, *adj.* impudent. T³ 87
Male, *sb.* wallet. C 920
Maleficio, *sb.* evil-doing. Bo. 169
Malgre, *prep.* in spite of. *Mars* 220
Malt, *pret.* melted. HF² 414
Mal-talent, *sb.* ill-will. R 330
Manace, *sb.* menace. A 2007
Manasyng, *p. pres.* menacing. Bo. 416
Maner, *sb.* manor. Bl. 1003
Maner, **Manere**, *sb.* manner. *Pite* 24, I. 251
Manye, *sb.* mania. A 1374
Manuete, *adj.* gentle. T³ 194
Mappemounde, *sb.* *mapa mundi*, map of the world. *Rescrounde* 2
Marc, *sb.* thirteen shillings and fourpence. G 1026
Marcial, *adj.* martial. T⁴ 1669
Mare, *adv. comp.* more. R 2709
Mareys, *sb.* mar-h. D 970, Bo. 536
Mary, *sb.* marrow. C 542, Bo. 1008
Marybones, *sb. pl.* marrow-bones. A 380
Market-betere, *sb.* bully at fairs. A 3936
Markys, *sb.* marquis. E 786
Markysosse, *sb.* marchioness. E 283
Martire, *sb.* torment. T⁴ 818
Mased, *p. p.* daved. Bl. 12
Mast, *sb.* acorns. *Former Age* 6
Masty, *adj.* acorn eating. HF³ 687
Mate, *adj.* depressed, discomfited. I. 126, R 3167
Matere, *sb.* matter, subject. Bl. 43
Maugree, *prep.* despite. A 1169
Maugree, *sb.* ill-will, R 3144; **Can maugree**, owe a grudge, R 4399, 4559
Maumettrie, *sb.* Mohanmedism, idolatry. B 236
Mainciple, *sb.* purveyor. A 510
Mawmet, *sb.* idol. I 749
Mazelyn, *sb.* maple-bowl. B 2042
Mede, **Meede**, (1) reward, bribe, A 3380, (2) mead, a drink, B 2042; (3) meadow, A 89
Medlee, *adj.* of mixed stuff. A 328
Medleth, *pres.* mingles, mixes. L 874, Bo. 1313
Medlynge, *sb.* mixture. Bo. 1356
Meede, *sb.* *Sce Mede*
Meene, *pres.* bemoan. R 2596
Meeth, *sb.* mead, a drink. A 2279

Meignee, *sb.* household. I 894
Meygned, *p.p.* maimed. R 3356
Meyneue, *sb.* retinue, household. A 1258
Meynt, *p.p.* mingled. R 1940
Meyntenaunce, *sb.* demeanour. Bl. 83;
Mekede, *pret.* meekened. R 3584
Mel-tid, *sb.* meal-time. T⁵ 1556
Melle, *sb.* mill. A 3923
Memoire, **Memorie**, *sb.* memory, commemoration. Bl. 944, A 1906
Mencoun, *sb.* mention. B 54
Mendience, *sb.* mendicancy. R 6657
Mendynantz, *sb. pl.* begging friars. D 1906
Mene, *pres.* mean, intend. A 2063, T² 16
Mene, *adj.* middle, of middle size. T⁵ 206
Meneliche, *adj.* moderate. Bo. 251
Mentes, *sb. pl.* mint. R 731
Merciabie, *adj.* merciful. I. 346
Mere, *sb.* mare. A 541
Merke, *adj.* dark. R 5339
Merlion, *sb.* merlin-hawk. PF 339
Mervaille, *sb.* marvel. E 1186
Mes, **Messe**, *sb.*; **At good mes**, at advantage, R 3462, 1453
Meschief, *sb.* mischief; **At meschief**, in danger, A 2551
Mesel, *sb.* leper. I 624
Message, *sb.* messenger. B 144
Messagere, *sa.* messenger. Bl. 133
Messe, *sb.* mass. B 1413
Meste, *adj. pl.* most; **The meste**, the most important, T⁵ 440
Mester, *sb.* occupation. A 1340
Mesurable, *adj.* moderate. F 362
Measure, *sb.* moderation. E 622
Met, *pres.* dreams. PF 104
Met, *sb.* measure. I 799
Met, *pres. sub.* dream. Bl. 1233
Mette, *pret.* dreamt. B 4084, L 210
Meve, *v.* move
Meveresse, *sb. fem.* agitator. R 149
Mewe, *sb.* cage, coop. F 643, T³ 600
Mycohes, *sb. pl.* small leaves. R 5585
Myoh, *adj.* much. R 2704
Mycher, *sb.* thief. R 6541
Miht, *adj.* mighty. ABC 6
Mill-wey, **Millwey**, *sb.* 5 degrees of angular measurement, the third part of an hour. As. i. § 16
Millne-stones, *sb. pl.* mill-stones. T² 1384
Mynour, *sb.* miner. A 2465
Myntyng, *p. pres.* meaning. Bo. 38
Mirre, *sb.* myrrh. A 2938
Mys, *sb. pl.* mice. Bo. 492
Misaccounted, *p.p.* misreckoned. T⁵ 1185
Misbelieved, *p.p.* as *sb.* unbelievers. ABC 146
Mysboden, *p.p.* abused, harmed. A 909
Mysdeparteth, *pres. s.* divides unfairly. B 107
Misericorde, *sb.* mercy. ABC 35
Mysese, *sb.* discomfort. I 177
Mis-foryaf, *pret.* sorely mis-gave. T⁴ 1426
Myslay, *pret.* lay awry. A 3647
Misliwed, *p.p.* ill-behaved. T⁴ 330
Mismetre, *pres. sub.* scan wrongly. T⁵ 1706
Missatte, *pret.* suited ill. R 1194
Mysseyest, *pres. s.* speakest ill of. I. 323
Myster, *sb.* (1) craft, A 613; (2) need, R 1426, 6078; **What mystiers men**, what manner of men. A 1710
Mystihede, *sb.* mystery. *Mars* 224

Mystorned, *p.p.* turned aside. Bo. 1236
Miswey, *adv.* astray. R 4766
Mysawayes, *sb. pl.* by-paths, wrong roads. Bo. 1623
Miswent, *pret.* erred. T¹ 633
Myxnes, *sb. pl.* middens, dungheaps. R 6496
Mo, **Moo**, *adj.* more, others. A 1715, E 1039
Moche, **Mochoel**. See **Muche**, **Muchel**
Moder, *sb.* mother, ABC 49; the large plate in an astrolabe, As. i. § 2
Mooble, *adj.* moveable. As. i. § 21
Mooble, *sb.* furniture, T⁴ 1380; **Moobles**, *sb. pl.* moveables, chattels, E 1314
Moysoun, *sb.* crop. R 1677
Mokeren, *pres. pl.* heap up. Bo. 425
Mokereres, *sb. pl.* heapers up, hoarders. Bo. 425
Mokre, *v.* heap up. T³ 1375
Molte, *pret.* melted. T³ 10
Mone, *sb.* moon
Moneste, *pres. s.* admonish. R 3579
Montaunce, *sb.* value, amount. A 1570, C 863
Monyours, *sb. pl.* money-changers. R 6811
Mood, *sb.* anger. R 5162
Moote, *pres.* must, may. A 735
Mordre, *sb.* murder. B 4211
More, *sb.* root. T⁵ 25
Mormal, *sb.* gangrene. A 386
Morter, *sb.* night-light. T³ 1245
Mortifye, *v.* transmute. G 1126
Mortrer, *sb.* murderer. PF 353
Mortreux, *sb.* a kind of stew. A 301
Morwe, *sb.* morrow, morning. A 331
Morwenyng, *sb.* morning. A 1062
Mosel, *sb.* muzzle. A 2151
Moste, *pres.* must
Mote, *pres.* must, may
Mote, *sb.* speck. T³ 1603
Motteleye, *sb.* motley. A 271
Mountaunce, *sb.* amount. R 1562
Mourdaunt, *sb.* pendant of a girdle. R 1094
Moustre, *sb.* show-piece. Bl. 911
Mowes, *sb. pl.* grimaces. R 5590, HF² 716
Mowyng, *sb.* ability. Bo. 1372
Mowled, *p.p.* grown mouldy. A 3870
Mowlen, *v.* moulder. B 32
Muable, *adj.* fleeting. T³ 822, Bo. 1455
Muche and lite, great and small. A 494
Muchel, *adj.* much. A 132
Mullok, *sb.* refuse. A 3873
Murlerly, *adv. comp.* more merrily. A 714
Musardo, *sb.* dreamer. R 3256, 4034, 7560
Muttre, *v.* mutter. T² 541
Muwe, *v.* mew, cage. A 349, T³ 1784
Muwe, *v.* change. T² 1258
Muwet, *adj.* mute. T⁵ 194

Nⁱ, before a vowel, -Ne, not
Na, *adj.* no. A 4026
Nadde, **Ne hadde**, had not. I. 278
Naddre, *sb.* adder. E 1786
Nadir, *sb.* the point of the heavens diametrically opposite to the zenith. As. ii. § 5
Nadstow, hadst thou not. A 4088
Na fors, no matter. A 4176
Nayles, *sb. pl.* nails. A 2141
Nayte, *v.* say no to, deny. I 1013
Nake, *pres. pl.* bare. Bo. 1616
Nakers, *sb. pl.* drums. A 2511
Nale, **Atte nale**, at the ale-house. D 1349

GLOSSARY

Nam, Ne am, am not. A 1122
Nam, pret. took. G 1297
Namely, adv. especially. B 1233
Na mo, no more. A 1589
Nart, Ne art, art not. ABC 26, G 497
Narwe, adj. narrow, close. E 1988
Nas, Ne was, was not. A 1649, 2105
Nat, adv. not. A 1145, 4087
Nath, Ne hath, hath not
Natheless, adv. nevertheless. E 377
Natureel, Naturel, adj. natural, by birth A 415, L 375
Ne, adv. not, nor. A 923, 1649
Neddras, sb. pl. adders. I 699
Nede, sb. need. B 4643
Nedeless, adv. needlessly. E 621
Nedely, adv. of necessity. B 4135
Nedescoost, adv. of necessity. A 1477
Neen, adj. none, no. A 4185
Neet, sb. cattle. A 597
Negardye, sb. niggardly. Truth 51
Neghen, v. draw near. I 318
Neigh, adv. nigh, near. Bl. 104
Nel, Ne will, will not. R 4344
Nempnen, name, B 507; Nempned, pret. E 609
Ner, adj. nearer. Bl. 887
Nere, Ne were, were not. B 547
Nevene, v. name. G 821
Neveradeel, not a whit. C 670
Neuwe, adv. newly. A 4239
Newed, pret. renewed itself. Bl. 905
Nexle, adj. sup. nearest. B 807
Nyce, adj. foolish. B 1088
Nydes, sb. pl. trifles. D 1760
Nyghtertale, sb. night-time. A 07
Nigromanciens, sb. pl. magicians. I 603
Nil, Ne will, will not. T¹ 1020
Nillynge, sb. refusing. Bo. 1656
Nyn, Ne in, nor in. E 2088
Nys, Ne is, is not. A 1677
Nyste, Ne wiste, knew not. B 384
Noble, sb. coin worth 6s. 8d. A 3256
Nobleye, sb. nobility. E 828
No fors, no matter. B 285
Noye, v. harm. R 3772
Noious, adj. harmful. R 3231
Nolde, Ne wolde, would not. A 1024
Nome, p.p. taken. I 822
Non, adj. none
Nones, For the nones, for the occasion. A 545
Nonne, sb. nun. A 118
Noon, adj. none. A 773
Noot, pres. Ne woot, know not. A 1340, Bl. 29
Noote, sb. note, music. R 1711
Norice, sb. nurse. E 561
Nortelrie, sb. good manners. A 3967
Nory, sb. foster-child. Bo. 850
Nosethirles, sb. pl. nostrils. A 557
Noskinnes, adj. no kind of. H¹ 704
Nost, Ne wost, knowest not
Note, sb. need, business. A 4068
Noteful, adj. useful. Bo. 33
Notemygges, sb. pl. nutmegs. R 130
Not-head, sb. close-cropped head. A 109
Nother, Ne other, nor other
Nouncerteyn, sb. uncertainty. I enus 40
Noun-power, sb. impotence. Bo. 726
Noutaer, adj. neither. Bl. 530
Novelrie, sb. novelty. F 619
Nowches, sb. pl. jewels. E 382

Nowthe, adv. now. A 462
O, num. one. A 2725, G 335, R 6398
Obeissaunce, sb. obedience. A 2974
Observaunce, sb. respect, ceremony. A 1045
Observe, v. respect, countenance. B 1821
Octogamy, marrying eight times. D 33
Of, adv. off. A 782
Of-caste, imper. cast off. PF 132
Offended, p.p. hurt. A 909
Offensioun, sb. opposition. A 2416
Ofici, sb. secular employment. A 292
Of-thowed, p.p. thawed. HF³ 53
Oynement, sb. ointment. A 631
Oynons, sb. pl. onions. A 634
Oystre, sb. oyster. A 182
Olifauntes, sb. pl. elephants. Bo. 78
Olmeris, sb. pl. elms. R 1314
O-loft, adv. aloft. T¹ 950
Omager, sb. one who does homage, vassal. R 3288
On, prep. on, in, at
Onde, sb. malice. R 148
Ones, adv. once. A 1836
Onloft, adv. aloft. E 229
Oo, num. one
Ook, sb. oak. A 1702, 2921
Oon, num. one. A 2969
Ooned, p.p. united. Bo. 1463
Oones, adv. once
Ooning, sb. unifying. Bo. 1464
Only, adv. only. H 143
Oore, sb. compassion. A 3726
Oost, sb. host, army. I 626, Bo. 88
Openers, sb. pl. medlars. A 3871
Open-heveded, p.p. bareheaded. D 645
Opie, sb. opium. A 1472
O point, at point, ready. T⁴ 1638
Ordal, sb. ordeal. T³ 1046
Orde, sb. dat. point. I 645
Ordeyne, adj. ordered. T¹ 892
Ordeynly, adv. in order. Bo. 1524
Ordred, p.p. ordained. I 782
Orfrays, sb. gold embroidery. R 1076
Orisonte, sb. horizon. T⁵ 276
Orloge, sb. sundial, clock. PF 530, B 4044
Orphelyn, sb. orphan. Bo. 334
Ost, sb. host, army. Former Age 40
Ostelementes, sb. pl. utensils, furniture. Bo. 455
Other, conj. either, or
Ouche, sb. jewel. D 743
Oules, sb. pl. awls. D 1730
Oultrage, sb. excess. Bo. 455
Ounces, sb. pl. small pieces. A 677
Ounded, adj. wavy. T⁴ 743
Outen, v. publish, display. E 2438, G 834
Out-hees, sb. hue and cry. A 2012
Outher, conj. either, or. A 1485, 1593
Outlandish, adj. foreign. Former Age 22
Outrage, sb. excess. Former Age 5
Outreys, v. pass beyond control. E 643
Outrely, adv. utterly. C 849
Out-taken, prep. except. B 277
Over-al, prep. above, besides
Over-al, adv. everywhere, generally. A 547, 1664
Overeste, adj. sup. uppermost. A 270
Overkervith, pres. intersects. As. i. § 21
Overlad, p.p. overborne. B 3101
Overslope, sb. under garment. G 633

Oversprat, *pres.* overspreadeth. T² 767
Overt, *adj.* open. HF² 210
Overthrowynge, *adj.* hasty, biassed. Bo. 1530
Overthwart, *adv.* across. A 1991, T³ 685
Overwhelveth, *pres.* agitates. Bo. 356
Owen, *v.* ought
Owgh, *interj.* alas. Bo. 228
O-wher, *adv.* anywhere. A 653
Owndynge, *sb.* waving. I 417
Owtreyen, **Outreye**, *v.* act outrageously, pass beyond control. Bo. 758, E 643
Paas, *sb.* pace, especially walking-pace. A 2897, G 575
Pace, *v.* pass. A 175
Paye, *v.* content. R 3599
Payde, *p.p.* pleased
Payen, *adj.* pagan. A 2370
Payens, *sb. pl.* pagans. I 786
Pallet, *sb.* pallet. T³ 229
Palasie, *sb.* palsy. R 1098
Paleys, *sb.* palace. A 2199
Palestral, *adj.* athletic. T⁵ 304
Palyng, *sb.* the making a perpendicular stripe. I 417
Palys, *sb. pl.* pales, palisade. Bo. 231
Pan, *sb.* brain-pan, skull. A 1165
Panade, *sb.* knife. A 3929
Pandemayne, *sb.* fine bread. B 1915
Panyers, *sb. pl.* panniers. HF³ 849
Panter, *sb.* snare. I 131
Papeer, *sb.* pepper. G 762
Papejay, *sb.* parrot, popinjay. B 1957, B 1559
Papelard, *sb.* deceiver. R 7281
Papelardie, *sb.* deceit. R 6796
Paper, *sb.* indenture. A 4404
Parage, *sb.* dignity, high-priest. D 250, 1120, R 4759
Paramentz, **Parementz**, *sb. pl.* rich array. A 2501, F 269
Paramour, *sb.* sweet-heart. D 454
Paramours, *adv.* passionately. T⁵ 158
Paraventure, **Paraunter**, *adv.* peradventure. B 199, L 362
Parcel, *sb.* part. *Pite* 106
Pardee, *par Dieu*, B 1077
Paragal, *adj.* equal. T⁵ 840
Parementz. See **Paramentz**
Parentele, *sb.* relationship. I 908
Parfay, *par foi*. B 110
Parfit, *adj.* perfect. A 72
Parfourned, *p.p.* consummated. B 1640
Parfournest, *pres.* accomlishest. B 1797
Parishshens, *sb. pl.* parishioners. A 482
Paritory, *sb.* peltory. G 581
Parlement, *sb.* parliament, deliberation. A 1306
Paroch prest, *sb.* parish priest. R 6384
Parodie, *sb.* period. T⁵ 1548
Parsoners, *sb. pl.* partners. R 6952
Parten, *v.* take part, share. L 465
Partie, *sb.* partisan. A 2657
Partying-felawes, *sb. pl.* partners. I 637
Parrys, *sb.* church-porch. A 310
Pas, *sb.* See **Paas**
Passant, *adj.* surpassing. A 2107
Passen, *v.* surpass. I 162
Patre, **Patren**, *v.* patter, chatter. R 6794, 7241
Paumes, *sb. pl.* palms. T² 1114

Pax, *sb.* a painted tablet kissed during the celebration of mass. I 407
Pecunyal, *adj.* pecuniary. D 1314
Peas, *sb.* peace. A 1671
Peyned, *pret.* pained, troubled. A 139
Peytral, *sb.* breast-picce. G 564
Pel, *sb.* castle. HF³ 220
Pelet, *sb.* shot. HF³ 553
Penant, *sb.* penitent. B 3124
Pencil, **Pensel**, *sb.* small banner. T⁵ 1043, R 6282
Penyble, *adj.* painstaking. B 3490
Penner, *sb.* pen-case. E 1879
Penoun, *sb.* pennant, banner. A 978
Pens, *sb. pl.* pence. C 402
Peple, *sb.* people. A 995
Percas, *adv.* perchance. R 6647
Percely, *sb.* parsley. A 4350
Perchemynne, *sb.* parchment. R 6584
Perdurable, *adj.* lasting. I 75
Perdurablete, *sb.* immortality. Bo. 552
Peregryn, *adj.* pilgrim. F 428
Perelonette, *sb.* pear-tree. A 3248
Perfit, *adj.* perfect. A 1271
Perissed, *p.p.* destroyed. I 579
Perree, *sb.* precious stones, jewellery. A 2936, B 3495, D 344
Pers, *adj.* blue. A 439
Persaunt, *adj.* piercing. R 2809
Persone, **Persoun**, (1) person, A 2725; (2) parson. A 478
Perturben, *pres. pl.* disturb. A 906
Pervynke, *sb.* periwinkle. R 903
Pese, *v.* appease. R 3397
Pesene, *sb. pl.* peas. L 648
Pesible, *adj.* peaceable. Bo. 169
Philosophre, *sb.* philosopher, esp. an alchemist. A 297
Phitonesses, *sb. pl.* diviners, witches. HF³ 171
Pye, *sb.* magpie, chattering. T³ 527
Piggesnye, *sb.* pig's eye, a term of endearment. A 3268
Pighte, *pret.* pitched. A 2689
Pike, *v.* (1) peep, T³ 60; (2) pick; **Pyketh**, *pres.* picks over, smartens, E 2011; (3) **Pike on**, prick against, T² 1274
Piked, *pret.* stole. I 2467
Fykepurs, *sb.* pick-pocket. A 1998
Fykerel, *sb.* young pike. E 1419
Pilche, *sb.* fur coat. *Proverbs* 4
Piled, *adj.* plucked, scanty, bald. A 67, 3935, 4306
Pilere, *sb.* pillow. Bl. 738
Pilled, *p.p.* plundered. I 1262
Pilours, *sb. pl.* plunderers. A 1007
Pilwe, *sb.* pillow. Bl. 284
Pilwe-beer, *sb.* pillow-case. A 694
Fymet, *sb.* spiced wine. A 3378, Bo. 476, R 6027
Pynchen, *v.* cavil at, A 326; **Pynchest**, *Fortune* 57
Pyne, *sb.* pain, torture. T² 676, A 1746
Pyn-trees, *sb. pl.* pine-trees. Bo. 477
Piper, *adj.* used for pipes or horns. PF 178
Pyrie, *sb.* pear-tree. E 2217
Pissemeyre, *sb.* ant. D 1825
Pistel, *sb.* epistle, story. I 1021
Pitaunce, *sb.* portion of food. A 224
Place, *sb.* chief house. B 1910
Plages, *sb. pl.* coasts, quarters. B 543, As. i. § 5
Playes, *sb. pl.* devices. Bl. 569

- Plat**, *adj.* flat. B 3947
Platly, *adv.* flatly. T³ 786
Playe, *v.* play, jest. A 1127
Playn, *adj.* (1) full, A 315; (2) plain, frank, I. 328, An. 278
Playn, **Playn**, *adv.* (1) fully, A 327; (2) plainly, B 219
Playne, *v.* complain. D 1313
Playng, *p. pres.* arguing. PF 495
Playnlich, *adv.* plainly. T² 272
Plesauunce, *sb.* pleasure. I. 1446
Plete, **Pleten**, *v.* plead. T² 1468, Bo. 296
Plye, *v.* bend. E 1169, R 4389
Plyght, *p.p.* plucked, D 790; **Plighte**, *pret.* pulled, B 15
Plit, *sb.* plight. T² 712
Plite, *v.* fold. T² 1254
Plowngy, *adj.* moist, Bo. 64, 616
Poeplish, *adj.* vulgar. T⁴ 1677
Poileys, *adj.* Apulian. F 195
Poynaunt, *adj.* pungent. A 352
Poynt, *sb.*; **In good poynt**, in good condition, A 200; **At poynt devys**, carefully, A 3689
Poyntel, *sb.* pencil, stylus. D 1742, Bo. 1810
Poke, *sb.* pocket, bag. A 3780
Pokettes, *sb. pl.* bags. G 808
Polyve, *sb.* pulley. F 184
Pome-garnettys, *sb. pl.* pomegranates. R 1356
Pomel, *sb.* crown, top. A 2689
Pomely, *adj.* dappled. A 616
Pool, *sb.* pole. Bo. 1435, As. i. § 14
Popelote, *sb.* puppet. A 3254
Popet, *sb.* poppet, doll. B 1891
Popped, *pret.* bedizened. R 1019
Poppere, *sb.* dagger. A 3931
Poraille, *sb.* poor folk. A 247
Porismes, *sb. pl.* corollaries. Bo. 924
Portatif, *adj.* portable. As. 171
Portecolys, *sb.* portcullis. R 4168
Porthors, *sb.* brevity. B 1321
Portretour, *sb.* artist. A 1899
Pose, *sb.* a cold. A 4152
Pose, *pres. s.* put the case, suppose. A 1162, T³ 310
Possessioners, *sb. pl.* members of endowed orders. D 1772
Posseth, *pres. s.* pushes, I. 2420; **Possed**, **Posshed**, *p.p.* pushed, driven, T⁴ 415, R 4625
Postum, *sb.* abscess. Bo. 694
Potente, *sb.* staff. D 1776, T³ 1222, R 368
Potestat, *sb.* potentate. D 2007
Poudremarchant, *sb.* flavouring powder. A 381
Poungage, *sb.* food for pigs. *Former Age* 7
Pounne, *sb.* pawn in chess. B. 660
Pouped, *pret.* blown. II 90
Pourelly, *adv.* poorly. A 1412
Pous, *sb.* pulse. T³ 1114
Pouste, *sb.* power. Bo. 1423, R 6484
Pownsonyng, *sb.* puncturing. I 418
Prece, *v.* press. R 4198
Predicacioun, *sb.* preaching. B 1176
Prees, *sb.* press, crowd. B 393, 865
Preest, *sb.* priest. B 4010
Preeve, *v.* stand testing. G 645
Preferre, *pres. suby.* surpass. D 96
Freye, *pres. s.* pray. B 3995
Freyneeth, *pres. s.* preens. F 2011
Freyse, *v.* praise. I. 67
Prenostik, *adj.* prophetic. *Fortune* 34
Prenten, *v.* imprint. T² 900
Pres, *sb.* crowd. T² 1718
Presse, **Presen**, *v. press*, R 2899, *Pite* 19; **Pres-ying**, *p. pres.* R 6437
Frest, *adj.* ready. T² 785, T³ 485
Pretende, *v.* intend. T⁴ 922
Preterit, *adj.* past. R 5011
Preve, *sb.* proof. T⁴ 470, 690
Prove, *v.* prove. I. 9
Frydeles, *adj.* without pride. *Complaynte to his Lady* 25
Prighte, *pret.* pricked. F 418
Prihte, *pret.* pierced. ABC 163
Prikasour, *sb.* hard rider. A 189
Priketh, *pres. s.* spurs. A 1043
Prikyng, *sb.* spurring. A 191
Prikke, *sb.* point, centre. Bo. 1030
Prille. *See* note, R 1058
Prime, *sb.* the time between 6 and 9 A.M. B 1278, 4387
Prime, **At prime face**, *prima facie*, at first glance
Prymerole, *sb.* primrose. A 3268
Prys, *sb.* value, estimation. A 67, B 2285
Prysee, *adj.* secret. D 1136
Pryvely, *adv.* secretly. A 1443
Prolacions, *sb. pl.* preludes. Bo. 270
Prolle, *pres. pl.* prowl. G 1412
Propre, *adj.* proper, own. T² 1487
Proprete, *sb.* property. T⁴ 392
Prow, *sb.* profit. B 1598, T² 1664
Pruesse, *sb.* prowess. Bo. 1291
Pulle, *v.* pluck. A 652; **Pulled**, *p.p.* A 177
Purchase, *v.* obtain. T⁴ 557
Purchas, *sb.* earnings. A 256
Purchasyng, *sb.* prosecuting. A 320
Purchasour, *sb.* prosecutor. A 319
Pure, *adj.* mere, very. A 1279
Pured, *p.p.* refined. F 1560
Purple, *adj.* purple. I. 654
Pursewing, *adj.* following, in accordance with. B. 958
Purtreye, *v.* draw. A 90
Purveialle, *adj.* providential. Bo. 655
Purveiaunce, *sb.* providence. A 1252
Purveye, *v.* provide. E 191
Put, *pres.* putteth. I. 652
Put, *sb.* pit. I 170
Putours, *sb. pl.* whoremongers. I 886
Quaad, *adj.* evil. A 4357
Quakke, *sb.* hoarseness. A 4152
Qualm, *sb.* disease, A 2014; death-note, T³ 382
Quappe, *v.* flutter. T³ 57
Queerne, *sb.* mill. B 3264
Queynte, *pl. adj.* quaint. A 1531
Queynte, *sb.* pudendum muliebre. A 3276
Queynte, *pret.* was quenched. A 2334
Queyntise, *sb.* elegance, I 932; contrivance, I 733
Quelle, *v.* kill. B 4580
Quemen, *v.* please. T³ 695; *pres. pl.* T² 803
Querne, *sb.* mill. HF³ 708
Querrou, *sb.* quarryman. R 4149
Questemongers, *sb. pl.* holders of inquests. I 707
Quethe, *pres. s.* say, cry. R 6999
Quyke, *adj. pl.* alive. A 1015
Quyked, *pret.* revived. A 2335
Quyknesse, *sb.* liveliness. B. 26
Quynyble, *sb.* a part sung a fifth above the air. A 3332

- Quyrbolly**, *sb.* leather boiled and hardened. B 2065
Quishshin, *sb.* cushion. T² 1229
Quystron, *sb.* scullion. R 886
Quite, *v.* pay, redeem. satisfy. A 770, 1032, B 354
Quitly, *adv.* freely. A 1792
Quod, *pret.* said. B 1644
Quolnt, *adj.* quaint. R 2038
Quook, *pret.* quanked. A 1576
- Raa**, *sb.* roe. A 4086
Racynne, *sb.* root. R 4881
Rad, *p.p.* read, A 2595; **Radde**, *pret.* P¹ 21
Radevore, *sb.* tapestry (?). L 135
Rafte, *pret.* ref. L 1855
Rayed, *p.p.* striped. Bl. 250
Rakel, *adj.* hasty. T³ 429, H 278
Rakelnesse, **Rekelnesse**, *sb.* hastiness. H 283, *Scogan* 16
Rake-stele, *sb.* rake-handle. D 919
Rakle, *v.* be rash. T³ 1642
Ramage, *adj.* wild. R 5384
Rammysh, *adj.* ram-like. G 887
Rape, *sb.* haste, *Adam* 7; *adv.* hastily, R 6516
Rape and renne, rob and plunder. G 1422
Rather, *adv. comp.* earlier, sooner. Bo. 260, B 2265
Raughte, *pret.* reached. A 136
Ravnye, *sb.* rapine, Bo. 323; **Ravynnes**, *pl.* I 793
Ravyners, *sb. pl.* plunderers, Bo. 91; **Ravynour**, Bo. 1304
Ravysable, *adj.* ravenous. R 7006
Real, *adj.* royal. B 4366
Realtee, *sb.* royalty. *Fortune* 60
Reawme, *sb.* realm. B 797
Rebekke, *sb.* abusive term for an old woman. D 1573
Rechoe, *pres. subj.* expound. B 4086
Rechoeless, *adj.* careless. A 179
Rechased, *p.p.* chased back. Bl. 379
Roche, *v.* reach. Bl. 47
Recoorde, *pres. s.* confirm. A 1715
Recoourses, *sb. pl.* retrogressions. Bo. 11
Recreaundise, *sb.* cowardice. B 4038
Recured, *p.p.* recovered. R 4920
Reddour, *sb.* violence. *Fortune* 13
Rede, *sb.* reed-pipe. HF³ 131
Rede, **Reed**, *sb.* counsel. Bl. 203
Redeless, *adj.* deviceless. *Pite* 27
Redoutynge, *sb.* glorifying. A 2050
Redowte, *v.* respect. Bo. 73
Reed, *adj.* red. B 1301
Reed, **Rede**, *sb.* counsel. A 116
Reenden, *pres. s.* rend, destroy. Bo. 1092
Rees, *sb.* race; *In a rees*, hastily. T⁴ 350
Refect, *p.p.* refreshed. Bo. 1550
Refreyden, *v.* cool, T⁵ 507; **Refreyded**, **Refreyd**, *p.p.* frozen, cool, I 341, *Rosemounde* 21
Refut, *sb.* refuge. B 852, *ABC* 14
Regalye, *sb.* majesty. *Pite* 65
Regals, *sb. pl.* royal privileges. L 2128
Regne, *sb.* kingdom. A 1638
Reyes, *sb. pl.* round dances. HF³ 146
Reighte, *pret.* reached. HF³ 284
Reysed, *p.p.* (1) raised, Bl. 1277; (2) raided, A 54
Rekelnesse, *sb.* hastiness. *Scogan* 16
Reken, **Rekne**, *v.* reckon, recount. B 110, A 1933
Reless, *sb.* release, *ABC* 3; **Out of relees**, ceaselessly; G 46
- Relente**, *v.* melt. G 1278
Remes, *sb. pl.* realms. B 4326, Bo. 723
Remewed, *p.p.* removed. F 181
Remorde, *pres. subj.* cause remorse, T⁴ 1491; **Remordith**, vexes, Bo. 1519
Remounted, *p.p.* caused to rise again. Bo. 603
Remuable, *adj.* changeable. T⁴ 1682
Ren, *sb.* run. A 4079
Renably, *adv.* eloquently. D 1509
Reneyen, *v.* deny, B 3751; **Reneyed**, *p.p.* B 340
Renges, *sb. pl.* ranks. A 2594
Renomee, *sb.* renown. D 1159, L 1513
Renovelannces, *sb. pl.* renewals. HF² 185
Renovellen, *pres. pl.* renew. I 1027
Rent, rendeth. L 646
Rente, *sb.* income. B 4017
Replicacioun, *sb.* reply. A 1846, PF 536
Reprende, *v.* reprehend, blame. T¹ 510
Requerable, *adj.* desirable. Bo. 491
Resalgar, *sb.* rat's-bane. G 814
Rescous, **Rescus**, *sb.* rescue. T¹ 478, A 2643
Rescowe, *v.* rescue. T³ 857
Reseo, *v.* shake. A 1986
Resons, *sb. pl.* opinions. A 274
Resport, *v.* regard. T⁴ 850
Restelees, *adj.* restless. C 728
Rethor, *sb.* rhetorician. B 4397
Rethorien, *sb.* rhetorician. Bo. 341
Retorninge, *part. pres.* turning over. T⁵ 1023
Retraciclouns, *sb. pl.* recantations. I 1085
Revelous, *adj.* sportive. B 1194
Revers, *sb.* reverse. B 416
Revesten, *pres. pl.* clothe anew. T³ 353
Revoken, *v.* call back, restore. T³ 1118
Reward, *sb.* regard. B 2445
Rewe, *sb.* row. A 2866
Rewel boon, *sb.* smooth bone, ivory (?). B 2068
Rewliche, *adj.* pitiable. Bo. 312
Rewme, *sb.* realm. R 495
Rial, *adj.* royal. *Pite* 59
Ribibe, *sb.* old woman. D 1377
Ribible, **Rubible**, *sb.* fiddle. A 4396, 3331
Richesse, *sb.* riches. B 107
Ridying, *sb.* a jousting or procession. A 1377
Ridled, *p.p.* pleated. R 1235
Riet, *sb.* the net or perforated plate revolving within the 'mother' of an Astrolabe. *As. i.* § 14
Righte, *adj.* direct. B 556
Rightful, *adj.* righteous. *ABC* 31
Rihite, *adj.* right. *ABC* 75
Rympled, *p.p.* wrinkled. R 4494
Rys, *sb.* twig. A 3324
Rishe, **Risshie**, *sb.* rush. R 1701, T³ 1161
Rist, riseth. B 864, L 810
Rit, rideth. A 974
Roche, *sb.* rock. HF³ 40
Rochette, *sb.* rochet, linen vest. R 4751
Rode, *sb.* ruddiness. B 1917
Rode, *sb.* rood, cross. HF¹ 57
Roggeth, *pres. s.* shakes. L 2768
Roghte, *pret.* rocked. E 685
Roignous, *adj.* rotten. R 6190
Royleth, *pres. s.* rolls. Bo. 256
Royme, *sb.* itch. R 553
Roynous, *adj.* scabby, rough. R 988
Roket, *sb.* rochet, linen vest. R 1242
Rombel. See **Rumbel**
Rommer, *adj. comp.* roomier. A 4145
Ron, *pret.* rained. T³ 641
Rone. See note, R 1673

Ronne, *pres. pl.* ran. B 457⁸
Rood, *pret.* rode. A 966
Roof, *pret.* clave. HF¹ 373
Rootes, *sb. pl.* astrological roots. F 127⁶
Ropen, *p. p.* reaped. L 74
Rore, *sb.* uproar. T² 45
Rosene, *adj.* rosy. Bo. 353
Roser, *sb.* rose-tree. R 1651, 3059
Rosyn, *adj.* made of roses. R 345
Rote, *sb.* a small harp. A 236
Roughte, *pret.* reeked. T¹ 496
Rouken, *v.* cower, huddle. T⁵ 400; **Rouketh**, *pres. s.* A 1308
Rouncy, *sb.* hack. A 390
Roundel, *sb.* circlet. HF² 283
Rounynges, *sb. pl.* whisperings. HF³ 870
Route, *sb.* assembly. B 776
Route, *v.* assemble together. B 541
Routeth, *pres. s.* snores. A 3647
Routhe, *sb.* pity. A 914
Routyng, *sb.* rumbling. HF³ 843
Rove, *sb.* roof. A 3837
Rowe, *adj. pl.* rough. R 1838
Rowe, *adv.* roughly. G 861, T¹ 200
Rowe, *sb.* row, line, HF¹ 448; **Rowes**, *pl.* rays, beams, *Mars* 2
Rowne, *pres. pl.* whisper. D 241
Rowtyng, *sb.* snoring. A 4166
Rubible, *sb.* kind of fiddle. A 3331
Ruddok, *sb.* robin. PF 349
Ruggy, *adj.* unkempt. A 2883
Rumbel, *sb.* moaning wind, A 1979; *rumour*, E 997
Sachelis, *sb. pl.* satchels, bags. Bo. 90
Sad, *adj.* steadfast. E 220
Sadly, *adv.* firmly, seriously, steadfastly. A 2602, B 1266, 743
Say, *pret.* saw. B 809, Bl. 1088
Say, *v.* assay. R 5162
Sallouris, *sb. pl.* dancers. R 770
Salé, *sb.* soul. A 4187
Salue, *v.* salute, B 1723; **Salued**, *pret.* R 3610;
Salewed, *p. p.* F 1310
Salwes, *sb. pl.* willows. D 655
Samyt, *sb.* samite. T¹ 109
Sangwyn, *adj.* red. A 439
Sarge, *sb.* serge. A 2508
Sarpleris, *sb. pl.* sacks. Bo. 90
Sarsynish, *adj.* made of Saracen cloth, soft silk. R 1188
Sat, *pret.* fitted, suited, L 1735; **Sate**, *subj.* would befit, T² 117
Sauf, *adj.* safe. G 950
Sauter, *sb.* psalter. R 431
Sautrie, *sb.* psalter, small harp. A 296
Savacioun, *sb.* salvation. E 1677
Save, *adj.* safe. An. 267
Save, *sb.* sage. A 2713
Save-garde, *sb.* safe-conduct. T⁴ 139
Saverous, *adj.* pleasant, toothsome. R 84, 2812
Savete, *sb.* safety. R 6869
Sawcedem, *adj.* pimpled. A 625
Sawe, *sb.* saying. G 691
Soaled, *adj.* scabby. A 627
Soalle, *sb.* scab. *Adam* 3
Soantilone, *sb.* mason's rule. R 7064
Soarmuch, *sb.* skirmish. T² 611
Seathe, *sb.* harm, misfortune. A 446
Schad, *p. p.* scattered. Bo. 1478

Schrewes, *sb. pl.* rascals. Bo. 1365
Solat, *sb.* slate. *Merciles Beante* 34
Sclaundre, *sb.* slander, scandal. E 722
Sciendre, *adj.* slender. A 587
Scouchouns, *sb. pl.* escutcheons. R 893
Scoole, *sb.* school. B 1685
Scooleys, *v.* attend school. A 302
Soomes, *sb. pl.* foamingcs. Bo. 1612
Soorklith, *pres. s.* scorches. Bo. 525
Scripture, *sb.* inscription. T³ 1369
Scrit, *sb.* writing. T² 1130
Scrivenissly, *adv.* like a scribe. T² 1026
Seche, *v.* seek. A 784
Secree, *adj.* secret. B 4105
See, *sb.* sea. Bl. 67
See, *sb.* seat. T⁴ 1023
Seeke, *adj.* sick. A 18
Seel, *sb.* happiness. A 4239
Seelu, *adv.* seldom. B 2340, Bo. 1447
Seele, *sb.* seal. B 882
Sage, *sb.* seat. Bo. 102
Seigh, **Sey**, *pret.* saw. A 192, T² 277
Seyl, *sb.* sail. A 696
Seyn, *p. p.* seen. B 624
Seyn, *pres. pl.* say. B 622
Seynd, *p. p.* singed. B 4035
Saintuarie, **Seyntwarie**, *sb.* sanctuary. I 781, Bo. 131
Seistow, *sayest* thou. D 297
Selde, *adv.* seldom. A 1539, T⁴ 423
Sely, *adj.* innocent, simple, good, A 3404, B 682, 1702; *strange*, HF² 5
Selyly, *adv.* happily. Bo. 386
Selnesse, *sb.* happiness. T³ 825
Selve, *adj.* self-same. A 2584
Semblable, *adj.* like. I 408
Semblant, *sb.* appearance. I, 1736, R 3205
Semelhydede, *sb.* goodness. R 1130
Semycope, *sb.* short cloak. A 262
Semysoun, *sb.* low noise. A 1697
Sencer, *sb.* censor. A 3340
Sendal, *sb.* fine silk. A 440
Senith, *sb.* zenith. As. ii, § 26
Sent, *pres.* sendeth. T² 1123
Sentence, *sb.* meaning, purport. A 306, C 157
Septemtrioun, *sb.* the north. B 3657
Serenous, *adj.* serene. *Vite* 92 (*emend.*)
Sereyns, *sb. pl.* sirens. R 684
Servage, *sb.* servitude. A 1946
Servaunt, *sb.* lover. A 1814
Sesons, *sb. pl.* seasons. A 347
Sete, *v.* were seated. T² 81
Setewale, *sb.* valiant. R 1370
Sette . . . *cappe*. befool. A 586
Seur, *adv.* surely. T³ 1633
Scurte, *sb.* surety. A 1604
Sewed, *pursued*. B 4527
Sewes, *sb. pl.* dishes. F 67
Shal, *pres. s.* owe. T³ 791
Shale, *sb.* shell. HF³ 191
Shalmyses, *sb. pl.* shawms. HF³ 198
Shaltow, *shalt* thou
Shapen, *pres. pl.* prepare. A 772
Shaply, *adv.* likely. T⁴ 1452
Shawe, *sb.* grove. A 4367, T³ 720
Sheeldes, *sb. pl.* French crowns. A 278
Sheene, *adj.* beautiful. A 166
Sheete, *v.* shoot. A 3928
Shende, *sb.* harm, A 4410; **Shendeth**, *confounds* B 28

Shendshiþe, *sb.* ignominy. I 273
Shent, *p.p.* scolded, discomfited, spoilt. B 1731, A 2754, L 652, R 2584
Shepne, *sb. pl.* sheep-folds. A 2000
Sherte, *sb.* shirt. A 1566
Shet, *p.p.* shut. A 2597
Sheter, *sb.* as *adj.* shooter. PF 180
Shette, *pret.* shut. T³ 1086
Shilde, *subj. pres. s.*; **God shilde**, God forbid, A 3427, B 1356
Shynes, *sb. pl.* shins. A 1279
Shipnes, *sb. pl.* stables. D 871
Shiten, *p.p.* befouled. A 504
Shode, *sb.* parting of the hair. A 2007
Shof, *pret.* shoved. T³ 487, R 533
Sholde, *sb.* shoulder. D 348
Shonde, *sb.* harm. B 2098
Shoof, *pret.* shoved. PF 154
Shoop, *pret.* shaped, determined. *Pite* 20, B 1244
Shotwyndowe, *sb.* window with a bolt. A 3358
Shour, *sb.* onslaught, T⁴ 47; **Shoures**, *pl.* T³ 1064
Shrowednesse, *sb.* rascality. B 2721
Shrewes, *sb. pl.* rascals. C 835
Shryfte, *sb.* confession. L 745
Shrighte, *pret.* shrieked. A 2817
Shuldres, *sb. pl.* shoulders. A 6787
Sy, *pret.* saw, HF³ 72; **Sye**, *pret. pl.* E 1804
Syb, *adj.* related, akin. B 2565, R 1199
Sikarly, *adv.* certainly. A 137
Sye, *v.* sink. T⁵ 182
Syen, **Sye**, *pret. pl.* saw. G 110, E 1804
Siggen, *pres. pl.* say. T⁴ 194
Sighte, *pret.* sighed. B 1035
Sik, *sb.* sigh. T⁴ 1527
Sike, *v.* sigh. A 1540
Sike, *adj.* sick. A 245
Sikernessee, *sb.* security, surety. B 425, R 7309
Siklich, *adj.* sickly. T² 1528
Syn, *conj.* since. A 601
Synguler, *adj.* particular. I 300
Synwes, *sb. pl.* sinews. I 685
Sys-aas, six and ace. B 3851
Sisoures, *sb. pl.* scissors. HF² 182
Sit, *pres. s.* sitteth, sits, A 1509, Bl. 1107; fits, B 1353
Sith, **Sithen**, *conj. and adv.* since. A 930, 1521
Sithe, *sb.* scythe. L 646
Sithe, *sb. pl.* times. B 733
Sittande, *pres. part.* fitting. R 226;
Sittyngeest, *adj. sup.* most fitting. PF 551
Skalfaut, *sb.* scaffold. R 476
Skale, *sb.* scale, circle under cross-line of Astro-labe. As. i. § 12
Skye, *sb.* cloud. HF³ 510
Skylatoun, *sb.* fine cloth. B 1024
Skiles, *sb. pl.* reasons. F 205
Skilful, *adj.* reasonable. Bl. 533
Skilfully, *adv.* reasonably. G 320
Skryppe, *sb.* scrip. R 7493
Slawe, **Slawen**, *p.p.* slain. A 943, An. 59
Sle, *imper.* slay thou. A 1740
Sledys, *sb. pl.* sledges, carriages. Bo. 1165
Slee, *v.* slay. A 661
Sleep, *pret.* slept. A 98, Bl. 169
Sleers, *sb.* slayer. A 2005
Sleighe, *adj.* sly, clever. T⁴ 97
Slider, *adj.* slippery. A 1264

Slye, *adj. pl.* clever. Bl. 569
Slyk, *adj.* sleek. D 351
Slyk, *adj.* such. A 4130
Slyly, *adv.* cleverly. A 1444
Silt, *pres. s.* slideth. G 680, PF 3
Slivere, *sb.* sliver, part. T³ 1013
Slomrest, *pres. s.* slumberest. R 2576
Slow, **Slough**, *pret.* slew. B 984, Bl. 738, A 980, An. 56
Slowe, *sb.* moth. R 4751
Smerte, *adv.* smartly. A 149
Smete, *p.p.* smitten. R 3735
Smyt, *pres. s.* smiteth. E 122
Smoterlich, *adj.* smutty. A 3963
Snewed, *pret.* snowed, abounded. A 345
Snybben, *v.* reprove, A 523; **Snybbed**, *p.p.* A 4401
Socour, *sb.* succour. A 918
Sodeynliche, *adv.* suddenly. A 1575
Sojour, *sb.* sojourn. R 5151
Sokene, *sb.* tolls. A 3987
Sokyngly, *adv.* suckingly, gently. B 2765
Solaaas, *sb.* solace. A 798
Soleyn, *adj.* solitary. PF 607, R 3896
Solempne, *adj.* solemn, famous. A 209
Somdel, *adv.* somewhat. A 174
Some, *num. pron.* one; **Tenthe some**, ten in all, T² 1249; **Al and som**, one and all
Somer, *sb.* summer. A 394
Somme, *v.* summon. D 1377
Somonour, *sb.* summoner of offenders to the church courts. A 623
Sond, **Soond**, *sb.* sand. PF 243, B 4457
Sonde, *sb.* sending, message, messenger. B 1400, 760, 388
Sone, *adv.* soon
Sone, *sb.* son. A 2061
Sonne, *sb.* sun. A 7
Sonnish, *adj.* sunny. T⁴ 743
Soole, *adj.* solitary, alone. R 2955, 3023
Soond, *sb.* sand. B 4457
Soote, *adj. pl.* sweet. A 1
Sope, *sb.* sop. A 334
Soper, *sb.* supper. A 799
Sophyme, *sb.* problem. E 5; **Sophymes**, *pl.* sophistries, F 554
Sort, *sb.* lot, fate, oracle. A 844, T¹ 76
Sorwe, *sb.* sorrow. ABC 3
Sorwful, *adj.* sorrowful. *Pite* 25
Sory, *adj.* sad, luckless. A 2004
Sothesawe, **Sothesaugh**, *sb.* true tale. HF² 999, R 6130, 7588
Sotil, *adj.* subtle. L 1556
Soudiours, *sb. pl.* soldiers. R 4234
Soughe, *sb.* sow. I 156
Soulfre, *sb.* sulphur. HF³ 418
Soun, *sb.* sound. Bl. 1165
Sourden, *pres. pl.* rise from. I 448
Soures, *sb. pl.* bucks. Bl. 429
Sours, *sb.* rising, ascent. D 1938, HF³ 36
Soutere, *sb.* cobbler. A 3904
Soutil, *adj.* thin, subtle. A 2030, 2049
Sowdan, *sb.* Sultan. B 177
Sowdanesse, *sb.* Sultanness. B 358
Sowded, *p.p.* attached, devoted. B 1769
Sowe, *v.* sew, fasten. T² 1201
Sowke, *v.* suck. A 4157
Sowne, *v.* sound, play. A 565
Sowned, *pret.* tended to, B 3348; **Sownynge**, *pres. part.* A 275

- Space**, *sb.* spare time, opportunity. A 35, T² 505
Spak, *pret.* spoke. A 304
Span-newe, *adj.* newly spun, fresh. T³ 1665
Sparand, *part. pres.* sparing. R 5363
Sparrede, *pret.* locked. R 3320
Sparth, *sb.* halberd. A 2520, R 5078
Spaunysshinge, *sb.* blooming. R 3633
Spece, *sb.* species, kind, class. Bo. 1791, I 407
Speculacioun, *sb.* contemplation. Bo. 1660
Speere, *sb.* sphere. F 1280
Spelle, *sb. dat.* recital. B 2083
Spence, *sb.* buttery. D 1931
Spered, *p.p.* shut. R 2008
Speres, *sb. pl.* spheres. PF 59
Sperhawk, *sb.* sparrow-hawk. T³ 1192, R 4033
Spete, *v.* spit. T² 1617
Spille, *v.* die, perish, destroy. B 285, A 3278, Pite 46; **Spilt**, *p.p.* killed, B 857
Spitously, *adv.* angrily. A 3476
Spores, *sb. pl.* spurs. A 473
Sporneth, *pres. s.* tramples, T² 797; **Sporned**, *pret.* stumbled, A 4280
Spousaille, *sb.* marriage. F 115
Sprad, *p.p.* spread, scattered. Bl. 873
Spraynd, **Spreynd**, *p.p.* mingled. Bo. 397, B 422
Spryngoldes, *sb. pl.* stone-hurlers. R 4191
Squames, *sb. pl.* scales. G 759
Squaymous, *adj.* squeamish. A 3337
Squyre, *sb.* measuring-square, R 7064; **Squyres**, *pl.* A. i. § 12
Stadye, *sb.* race-course. Bo. 1275
Stak, *pret.* stuck. T³ 1372
Stal, *pret.* stole. Bl. 652, 1250
Stamyn, **Stames**, *sb.* linsey-woolsey, coarse cloth. I 1052, L 2360
Stank, *sb.* pool. I 841
Stant, *pres. s.* standeth. B 1704
Stape, **Stapen**, *p.p.* advanced. B 4011, F 1514
Stare, *sb.* starling. PF 348
Starf, *pret.* died. A 933
Starke, *adj. pl.* strong, stiff. B 3560
Steeere, *sb.* steersman. B 448
Steeereless, *adj.* without rudder. B 439
Steyen, *v.* ascend. Bo. 877
Steyre, *sb.* stair. Mars 120, T² 1705
Stel, **Stelo**, *sb.* steel. T² 593, HF² 175
Stele, *sb.* handle. A 3785
Stellifye, *v.* turn into a star. L 525
Stemed, *pret.* shone. A 202
Stenton, *v.* cease. A 903; **Stente**, *pret.* Bl. 154
Stepe, *adj.* bright. A 201
Steppes, *sb. pl.* tracks. Bo. 80
Stere, *sb.* steersman, guide, HF¹ 437, T³ 1291, rudder, T⁵ 641
Stere, *v.* steer, guide. T³ 910
Stere, *v.* stir, HF² 59; discuss, T⁴ 1451; **Steryng**, *pres. part.* moving, HF² 59
Stered, *p.p.* controlled, L 935
Sterlynges, *sb. pl.* sterling pennies, C 907, HF³ 225
Sterres, *sb. pl.* stars. A 208
Sterte, *pret.* started, L 1301; alighted, A 952
Sterve, *pres. sub.* die. A 1144
Stevens, *sb.* voice, A 2562, appointment, Mars 47, A 1524
Stewa, *sb.* closet. T³ 601
Stiborne, *adj.* stubborn. D 456
Stys, *v.* climb. Bo. 1550
Styere, *sb.* rudder. Bo. 1078
Stiked, *pret.* pierced. B 3897
Stillatorie, *sb.* vessel for distilling. G 580
Stynt, *pres. s.* stinteth, ceases. A 2471
Stirte, *pret.* started. A 1579
Styth, *sb.* anvil. A 2026
Styves, *sb. pl.* stews, brothels. D 1332
Styward, *sb.* steward. B 914
Stoke, *v.* stab. A 2546
Stokked, *p.p.* set in the stocks. T³ 380
Stonde, *v.* stand. A 745
Stoon, *sb.* stone. A 774
Stoor, *sb.* farm-stock. A 598
Stoore, *adj.* stubborn. E 2367
Storial, *adj.* historical. L 707
Stot, *sb.* cob. A 615
Stounde, *sb.* while, time, B 1021; **Stoundes**, *pl.* Bo. 220
Stoundemele, *adv.* momentarily. T⁵ 674, R 2304
Stour, *sb.* conflict. R 1270
Strake, *v.* run. Bl. 1311
Straughte, *pret.* stretched. A 2916
Strecche, *v.* stretch. An. 341, T¹ 888
Stres, *sb.* straw. A 2918, Bl. 670
Streen, **Strene**, *sb.* race, lineage. F 157, R 4859
Streit, *adj.* narrow. A 174
Stremes, *sb. pl.* beams. Bl. 338
Strene, *sb.* lineage. R 4859
Strenge, *sb. pl.* strings. PF 98, T¹ 732
Strike, *sb.* hank, A 676; **Strikes**, *pl.* strokes, As. i. § 19
Stroof, *pret.* strove. A 1038
Strouted, *pret.* spread. A 3315
Stubbes, *sb. pl.* stumps. A 1978
Studies, *sb. pl.* desires, purposes. Bo. 659, 1309
Stuwe, *sb.* stew, fish-pond. A 350
Submitted to, *p.p.* subsumed under. Bo. 1628
Succident, *sb.* subordinate house in astrology. As. ii. § 3
Sucred, *p.p.* sugared. T² 384
Suffisaunce, *sb.* sufficiency. Bl. 1037
Suffraunt, *adj.* patient. Bl. 1009
Suget, *sb.* subject. R 3535
Sukkenye, *sb.* gaberдинe. R 1232
Surement, *sb.* surety, pledge. F 1534
Surquidrie, *sb.* arrogance, over-confidence. I 405, 1067
Sursanure, *sb.* surface-healed wound. F 1113
Sustren, *sb. pl.* sisters. A 1019
Suwe, *v.* follow. T¹ 379
Swa, *adv.* so. A 4040
Swal, *pret.* swelled. B 1750
Swalwe, *sb.* swallow. T² 64
Swappe, **Swape**, *v.* strike. E 586, G 366
Swappe, *sb.* stroke. HF² 35
Swelgh, *sb.* sway, movement. B 296
Swelte, *pret.* fainted. F 1776, T³ 347
Swelwe, *pres. sub.* swallow, F 1188; **Swelweth**, *pres. ind. s.* swallows, B 2805
Swerd, *sb.* sword. A 2546
Swete, *v.* sweat. G 579
Swevene, *sb.* dream. B 4086
Swich, *adj.* such. D 281
Swynk, *sb.* toil. A 188
Swynke, *v.* toil. A 186
Swynkere, *sb.* labourer. A 531
Swire, *sb.* throat. R 325
Swythe, *adv.* quickly. C 796, An. 226

Swyve, *v.* have sexual intercourse with. A 4178
Swogh, *sb.* swoon, *Pite* 16; groan, A 3619
Swolowe, *sb.* gullet, gulf. I 1104
Swoot, *sb.* sweat. G 578
Swough, *sb.* sougning wind. A 1979

T', before a verb beginning with a vowel, to; a few instances given below

Taa, *v.* take. A 4129
Taas, *sb.* heap. A 1005
Tabard, *sb.* short coat for a herald, A 20; for a labourer, A 541
Tabyde, to abide. B 797
Tables, *sb. pl.* backgammon. F 900
Tabouren, *pres. pl.* drum. I 354
Taohe, *sb.* quality. *Balade* 20
Taffata, *sb.* fine silk. A 440
Taffraye, to affray, frighten. E 455
Taylagiers, *sb. pl.* tax-gatherers. R 6811
Tailages, *sb. pl.* taxes. I 567
Taille, *sb.* a tally, credit. A 570
Takel, *sb.* tackle. A 106
Tale, *sb.* speech. Bl. 535
Tale, Talen, *v.* talk, tell stories. T³ 231, A 772

Talent, *sb.* desire. B 1137, Bo. 260
Talyghte, to alight
Talynge, *sb.* story-telling. B 1624
Talle, *adj.* complacent, seemly, manly. *Mars* 38, I 1127 (emend. for 'calle')

Tallege, to allege
Tamen, *v.* make trial of. R 3994
Tamende, to amend
Tan, *p. p.* taken. R 5894
Tapes, *sb. pl.* ribbands. A 3241
Tapinage, *sb.* hiding; **In tapinage**, incognito. R 7361

Tapycer, *sb.* tapestry maker. A 362
Tapite, *sb.* carpet. Bl. 260
Tappestere, *sb.* barmaid, tapster. A 241
Targe, *sb.* shield. *ABC* 176
Tarraye, to array. E 961
Tassaye, to assay. E 454
Tassaille, to assail
Tatarwagges, *sb. pl.* tatters. R 7257
Tavyse, to advise. B 1426
Tecches, *sb. pl.* ill qualities. T¹ 935, HF³ 688, R 6517

Tecche, *v.* teach. A 308
Teene, *sb.* sorrow. *ARC* 3
Teyne, *sb.* thin plate of metal. G 1225
Tembrace, to embrace. B 1891
Teme, *v.* bring forth. HF³ 654
Temple, *sb.* inn of court. A 567
Temprure, *sb.* tempering. R 4177
Temps, *sb.* tense. G 875

Ten, **Ten so woode**, ten times as mad. I 733
Tendyte, to endite
Tendure, to endure. E 756
Tene, *sb.* sorrow. T¹ 814
Tenqueren, to enquire
Tentify, *adv.* attentively. E 334
Teruel, *adj.* male (of birds of prey). PF 393
Teroulet, *sb.* male falcon. F 504
Tery, *adj.* tearful. T⁴ 821
Terins, *sb.* tarins. R 665
Terme, *sb.*; **In terme**, **In termes**, precisely. C 311, A 323

Termyne, *v.* determine. PF 530
Terred, *p. p.* stripped. G 1171

Tespye, to espy
Testeres, *sb. pl.* headpieces. A 2499
Testes, *sb. pl.* vessels for testing metals. G 818
Testif, *adj.* headstrong. A 4004
Texpounden, to expound

Textuel, *adj.* verbally accurate. I 57
Ti', before substantives beginning with a vowel, the; a few instances are given below
Thakked, *p. p.* stroked. A 3304
Thankes, *sb. pl.*; **Hir thankes**, **His thankes**, willingly. A 1626, 2107

Thanne, *conj.* and *adv.* then
Thar, *pres. s.* it behaves. A 4120
That, *conj.* when. T² 910
That, introducing an optative clause. T⁵ 944
Thavys, the advice. A 3076
The, *pron. acc.* thee
Thedam, *sb.* prosperity; **Yvel thedam**, ill-luck, B 1595

Thee, Theen, *v.* thrive. B 4622, C 309
Theech, Theek, *subj. pres.* thrive I. C 947, A 3864

Theffect, the effect
Theigh, *conj.* though. T⁴ 175
Their, the air. I 1939
Thenche, *v.* think. A 3253
Thencrees, the increase. A 275
Thennes, *adv.* thence
Theorik, *sb.* theory. As. ii. pref.
Ther, *adv.* there, where. A 2809, T² 618
Ther, introducing an optative clause. T³ 947, 1015, 1437

Ther-geyn, there against. R 6555
Therthe, the earth
Thestat, the estate, rank
Thewed, *p. p.* endowed with virtues. *Mars* 180
Thewes, *sb. pl.* good qualities. F 1542
Thider, *adv.* thither
Thilke, that same. A 182
Thyng, *sb.*; **Make a thyng**, draw up a document; **Thynges**, *pl.* prayers, acts of devotion, business, A 2293, B 1281, 4286

Thinke, *v.* seem. T¹ 405
Thirled, *p. p.* pierced. A 2710
This, These, *dem. pl.* these. Bl. 166
This, this is. T² 363
Tho, *adv.* then. Bl. 7053
Tho, these

Tholed, *p. p.* suffered. D 1546
Thoo, *adv.* then. I 787
Thought, *sb.* anxiety. R 308
Thraste, *pret.* thrust. T² 1155
Threpe, *pres. pl.* call. G 826
Threste, *v.* thrust. A 2612; **Thresten**, *pres. pl.* Bo. 460

Thretyng, *sb.* threatening. G 698
Thridde, *num.* third
Thrye, *num. adv.* thrice. T² 89
Thringe, *v.* thrust. T⁴ 66
Thritten, *card. num.* thirteen. D 2259
Throf, *pret.* thrived. Bo. 717
Thrope, *sb.* hamlet. I 12
Throte-bolle, *sb.* wind-pipe. A 4273
Throwe, *sb.* short space of time. B 953, E 450, *Pite* 86

Throwes, *sb. pl.* throes. T⁵ 206, 1201
Thrust, *sb.* thirst. R 4722
Thurfte, *pret.* needed. T³ 572
Thurgh-girt, *p. p.* pierced. A 1010
Thurrok, *sb.* hold of a ship, sink. I 363, 715

Thwyte, *pres.* whittle, HF³ 848; **Thwyten**, *p.p.* R 933

Thwitel, *sb.* short knife. A 3933

Tyden, *v.* betide. B 327

Tydiff, *sb.* small bird: **Tidyves**, *pl.* F 648

Tikel, *adj.* frail. A 3428

Tikelnesse, *sb.* instability. *Truth* 3

Til, *prep.* to. A 180

Tylvers, *sb. pl.* tillers. R 4339

Tylynge, *sb.* tilling. Bo. 1637

Tymbres, *sb. pl.* timbrels. R 772

Tybet, *sb.* hood. A 233

Tire, *v.* feed on, Bo. 1132; **Tiren**, *pres. pl.* T¹ 787

Tit, *pres. s.* betides. T¹ 333

Titerynge, *sb.* hesitating. T² 1744

Title, *sb.* pretext. T¹ 488

Titled, *p.p.* devoted. I 894

To, The to, that one. Bo. 1587

To, *intensive prefix*; a few instances are given below

To-breste, *pres. pl.* break in pieces. A 2611

Tode, *sb.* toad. I 636

To-for, *prep.* before. T³ 335

Toft, *sb.* tuft. A 555

Toght, *adj.* taut. D 2267

To-hepe, *adv.* together, at close quarters. Bo. 1461, L 2008

To-yere, *adv.* this year. T³ 241

Tolde, *pret.* accounted. B 3676

Toles, *sb. pl.* tools. T¹ 632

Tollen, *v.* take toll. A 562

Tollan, *v.* allure. Bo. 531

Tolletances, *adj. pl.* of Toledo. F 1273

Tombesteres, *sb. pl.* female tumblers. C 477

To-medes, as reward. T² 1201

Ton, The ton, that one. Bo. 1066, R 5217

Tonge, *sb.* tongue. B 1666

Tonne, *sb.* tun, cask. E 215

Too, *sb.* toe, A 2726; **Toon**, *pl.* B 4052

Toord, *sb.* excrement. C 955

Topo, *sb.* crown of head. A 590

To-point, *adv.* point by point, exactly. T³ 497, T³ 1620

To-race, *subj. fr.* tear in pieces. E 572

To-rente, *pret.* rent in pieces. C 709

Torney, *sb.* tournament. T¹ 1669

To-slytered, *p.p.* slashed. B 840

To-tar, *pret.* lacerated. B 3801

Totalere, *sb.* tattler. I 353

Toty, *adj.* dizzy. A 4253

To-tore, *p.p.* torn. G 635

Touret, *sb.* turret. A 1909

Tourettes, *sb. pl.* round holes. A 2152

Toute, *sb.* backside. A 3812

Toverhyde, to outlive. D 1260

Towayle, *sb.* towel. R 161

To-wonde, *pret.* went to pieces. *Alars* 102

Traas, *sb.* train. I 285

Trace, *sb.* track. *Gentilesse* 3

Trad, *pret.* trod, *sens. sb.* B 4368

Trayed, *pret.* betrayed. HF¹ 390

Trays, *sb. pl.* traces. A 2139, T¹ 222

Traitorye, *sb.* treachery. An. 156

Transmuwen, *v.* transmute. T⁴ 467

Trappures, *sb. pl.* trappings. A 2499

Trattor, *sb.* go-between, pimp. T³ 273

Traunce, *v.* tramp. T³ 690

Trave, *sb.* frame for unruly horses. A 1282

Travers, *sb.* curtain, screen. E 1817, T³ 674

Trechour, *sb.* traitor. R 6602

Tredehowel, *sb.* treader of fowls, *sens. sb.* B 3135

Treget, *sb.* deceit. R 6267

Tregetour, *sb.* juggler, HF³ 167; **Tregetoures**, *pl.* F 1141

Trenden, *v.* roll. Bo. 1043

Trental, *sb.* series of masses for the dead. D 1717

Trepeget, *sb.* engine for casting stones. R 6279

Tresoun, *sb.* treason. I 1783

Tresour, *sb.* head-dress. R 508

Tretable, *adj.* tractable, communicative. I 411, Bl. 532

Tretec, *sb.* treaty. A 1288

Tretys, *adj.* well-made. A 152

Trotis, *sb.* treatise, document. T² 1607

Trewe, *adj.* true. A 531

Trewe, *sb.* truce. T³ 1779

Trewe-love, *sb.* condiment to sweeten breath. A 3662

Triacle, *sb.* balm, panacea. B 479, C 314

Trice, *v.* pull. B 3715

Trichour, *sb.* traitor. R 6308

Trille, *v.* turn, twist. F 316

Trype, *sb.* morsel. D 1747

Trist, *sb.* trust. T³ 403, I 473

Triste, *sb.* tryst. T² 1534

Tristed, *p.p.* trusted. R 3929

Trone, *sb.* throne. A 2529

Trouble, *adj.* troubled. *Comp. to his Lady* 128

Trowandysse, **Truandise**, *sb.* vagrancy. R 3954, 6604

Trowblable, *adj.* troublesome. Bo. 1768

Truauyding, *sb.* vagrancy. R 6721

Trubly, *adj.* troublesome. Bo. 1443

Trufics, *sb. pl.* trifles. I 715

Trye, *adj.* choice. B 2046

Tuel, *sb.* pipe, tube. HF³ 559

Tulle, *v.* lure. A 4134

Turmentrio, *sb.* torture. R 4740

Tweyfold, *adj.* folded in two. G 566

Twight, *p.p.* twitched, pulled, D 1563; **Twighte**, *pret.* T³ 1185

Twynne, *v.* sunder, B 517; *pres. subj.* depart, A 815

Twiste, *sb.* branch. E 2349

Umble, *adj.* humble. R 6155

Unaraced, *p.p.* untorn. Bo. 1156

Unconning, *adj.* stupid. T⁵ 1139

Uncouth, *adj.* strange, rare. HF³ 189

Uncovenable, *adj.* unsuitable. I 431

Undergrowe, *p.p.* undergrown. A 156

Undermeles, *sb. pl.* morning meal-time. D 875

Undernome, *p.p.* blamed, I 401; **Undernoon**, *pret.* perceived, G 243

Underpright, *pret.* stuffed. B 789

Underspoze, *v.* lever up. A 3465

Undertake, *pres. s.* assert. A 219

Undigne, *adj.* unworthy. F 359

Undirfongeth, *pres. s.* undertakes. R 5709

Undo, *v.* unravel. Bl. 898

Undren, *sb.* morning, the time between 9 A.M. and noon. B 4412, E 260

Uneschuable, *adj.* inevitable. Bo. 1643

Unespyed, *p.p.* undiscovered. T⁴ 1457

Unfeestlich, *adj.* unfeverish, worn. F 366

Ungiltif, *adj.* innocent. T³ 1018

Ungrobbed, *p.p.* undigged. *Former Age* 14

Unhappes, *sb. pl.* mishaps. T² 456
 Unheele, *sb.* misfortune. C 116
 Unkynde, *adj.* unnatural. B 88
 Unkyndely, *adv.* unnaturally. C 485
 Unkonnyng, *sb.* ignorance. I 1082
 Unkorven, *p.p.* unpruned. *Former Age* 14
 Unkouth, *adj.* rare. A 2497
 Unlefull, *adj.* unlawful. Bo. 274, R 4880
 Unneste, *imper.* quit thy nest. T⁴ 305
 Unnethe, *Unnetthes*, *adv.* hardly. B 1050, 1675
 Unparrygal, *adj.* unequal. Bo. 603
 Unplitable, *adj.* perilous. Bo. 122
 Unplyten, *v.* unfold. Bo. 583
 Unresty, *adj.* restless. T⁵ 1355
 Unsad, *adj.* inconstant. F 995
 Unsel, *adj.* unhappy. A 4210, Bo. 361
 Unset, *adj.* unappointed. A 1524
 Unsitting, *adj.* unbefitting. T² 307
 Unspersed, *p.p.* unlocked. R 2656
 Unthank, *sb.* ingratitude, little thank. T⁵ 699
 Unwar, *adj.* unawares. F 1356
 Unweelde, *adj.* impotent. A 3886
 Unwedmed, *adj.* undefiled, pure. B 924, ABC 91
 Unwist, *adj.* ignorant. T¹ 93
 Unwit, *sb.* folly. *Marv* 271
 Unwrye, *v.* uncover. T¹ 858
 Unyolden, *adj.* without yielding. A 2642
 Up, *prep.* upon. Bl. 921
 Up-bounde, *p.p.* bound up. T³ 517
 Up-frete, *v.* eat up. T⁵ 1470
 Uprighte, *adv.* full length, whether standing or lying. A 1194
 Upriste, *sb.* rising. A 1051
 Up-so-doun, *adv.* topsy-turvy. Bo. 1695
 Up-swal, *pret.* swelled up. B 1750
 Urchouns, *sb. pl.* hedgehogs. R 3135
 Utter, *adj.* outer. R 4208

 Vache, *sb.* cow. *Truth* 22
 Vailith, *Valeth*, *pres.* avails. R 5765, 5762
 Valance, *sb.* failure. *Mars* 145 (*see note*)
 Vane, *sb.* weather-vane. E 996
 Vanytee, *sb.* folly. A 3835
 Vassalage, *Vassellage*, *sb.* prowess, good service. L 1667, A 3054
 Vavasour, *sb.* landholder. A 360
 Vekke, *sb.* old woman. R 4286
 Vendable, *adj.* saleable. R 5804
 Venerie, *sb.* hunting. A 166, 2308
 Veniaunce, *sb.* vengeance. Bo. 1375
 Venym, *sb.* poison. A 2751
 Vennyous, *adj.* poisonous. ABC 149
 Ventusinge, *sb.* cupping. A 2747
 Ver, *sb.* spring. T¹ 157
 Verdit, *sb.* verdict. A 787
 Verger, *sb.* orchard. R 3234, 3618
 Verve, *imper.* guard (?). A 3485
 Verytrot, *sb.* quick-trot. A 3770
 Vermayle, *adj.* red. R 3645
 Vernage, *sb.* white wine. B 1261
 Vernycle, *sb.* St. Veronica cloth. A 685
 Vernysshed, *pret.* varnished. A 4149
 Verray, *Verrele*, *adj.* genuine, true. I 1012, Bo. 1729
 Verrayment, *adv.* truly. B 1903
 Verre, *sb.* glass. T² 867
 Vertuous, *adj.* skilled. R 2311
 Vesselage, *sb.* prowess. R 5871

Veze, *sb.* rush of wind. A 1985
 Viage, *sb.* voyage, journey. A 723
 Vigilies, *sb. pl.* wakes. A 377
 Vileynye, *sb.* anything unbecoming a gentleman. A 70
 Virytrate, *sb.* hag. D 1582
 Vitaille, *sb.* victuals. A 248
 Vitremyte, *sb.* woman's cap. B 3562
 Void6, *sb.* sleeping cup. T³ 674
 Voyde, *adj.* empty, penniless. Bo. 471
 Volage, *adj.* giddy. H 239
 Voltor, *sb.* vulture. Bo. 1132
 Volunte, *sb.* will. R 5276
 Voluper, *sb.* cap. A 3241
 Vounde, *adj.* *See note*, R 7063

 Waget, *sb.* blue cloth. A 3321
 Wayfereres, *sb. pl.* confectioners. C 479
 Wayke, *adj.* weak. A 887, B 1671
 Waymentynge, *sb.* lamentation. A 902, 1921
 Wayted, *pret.* watched. A 571
 Walsh-note, *sb.* walnut. HF³ 191
 Walwe, *v.* wallow. T¹ 699
 Walwyng, *pres. part.* wallowing. A 3616
 Wan, *pret.* won. A 442
 Wanges, *sb. pl.* cheek-teeth, A 4030; Wang-tooth, B 3234
 Wanhope, *sb.* despair. A 1249
 Wanye, *v.* wane. A 2078
 Wanten, *pres. pl.* are lacking. *Pile* 76
 Wantrust, *adj.* distrustful. H 281
 War, *adj.* wary, aware. A 309, 806
 Warde, *sb.* guardianship. Bl. 248
 Wardecors, *sb.* bodyguard. D 359
 Warderere, look out behind! A 4101
 Wardright, *sb.* guardianship. Bo. 492
 Wardrobe, *sb.* privy. B 1762
 Ware, *imp.* beware that. B 4146
 Waryangles, *sb. pl.* butcher birds. D 1408
 Warlice, *v.* heal. C 906
 Warlen, *Warye*, *v.* curse. T² 1619, B 372
 Warisoun, *sb.* reward. R 1537
 Warisshe, *v.* recover, B 2170; Warissed, *p.p.* cured, F 1138, Bl. 1103
 Warissshyng, *sb.* healing. B 2205
 Warly, *adv.* warily. T³ 454
 Warne, *v.* repulse. ABC 11
 Warnestoores, *sb.* garrison. B 2485
 Wast, *sb.* waste. B 1609
 Wastel-breed, *sb.* cake of fine flour. A 147
 Wawes, *sb. pl.* waves. A 1958
 Webbe, *sb.* weaver. A 362
 Wedde, *sb. dat.* pledge. A 1218
 Wede, *sb.* clothing. A 1006
 Weder, *sb.* weather, D 2253; Wedres, *pl.* R 73
 Weeply, *adj.* tearful. Bo. 1120
 Weerdes, *sb. pl.* fates. Bo. 92
 Weex, *pret.* waxed. B 563
 Wegge, *sb.* wedge. As. i. § 14
 Weyeth, *pres. s.* weighs. A 1781
 Weyked, *p.p.* weakened. R 4737
 Weylawey, *interj.* alas. Bl. 718
 Weymentynge, *sb.* lamentation. R 510
 Weyven, *v.* depart from, E 1483; Weyve, *imper.* abandon, Bo. 257
 Welde, *sb.* a plant. *Former Age* 17
 Welde, *v.* rule. D 271
 Weldy, *adj.* powerful. T³ 636
 Wele, *sb.* well-being. A 895
 Welk, *pret.* walked. T⁵ 1235

GLOSSARY

Welken, *v.* wither. Bo. 1590
Welkne, *sb.* welkin. *Fortune* 62
Welmeth, *pres. s.* wells. R 1561
Welte, *pret. ruled.* B 3200
Wel-willy, *adj.* benevolent. T³ 1257
Wem, *sb.* spot, harm. F 121
Wemmoless, *adj.* spotless. G 47
Wende, *pret. subj.* thought. T⁴ 1650
Wene, *sb.* doubt. R 574
Wente, *sb.* turn, passage. T² 815, T³ 787
Wepene, **Wepne**, *sb.* weapon. A 1591, 1601
Werble, *sb.* song. T² 1033
Were, *sb.* doubt, L 2686, Bl. 1294; danger, R 2827
Were, *v.* guard. A 2550
Were, *sb.* weir, pool. T³ 35, PF 138
Werne, *v.* turn away, refuse. L 448, T⁴ 111, HF³ 469
Werre, *adv.* worse. Bl. 615
Werre, *sb.* war. A 1671
Werre, *v.* make war on. *ABC* 116
Werreye, *v.* make war on, persecute, A 1484, R 6926; **Werreleth**, *pres. s.* battles against, I 401; **Werreld**, *p.p.* persecuted, R 2078
Wert, *sb.* wart. A 555
Wessh, *pret.* washed
Weste, *v.* turn westward. L 61
Weten, *v.* know. L 1474
Wetheres, *sb. pl.* weathers. A 3542
Wex, *sb.* wax. G 1268
Wex, *pret.* waxed, increased, A 1362; **Wexynge**, *pres. part.* A 2077
What, *inter.* why. A 184
Whelkes, *sb. pl.* pimples. A 632
Wher, (1) where, A 1351; (2) whether, A 1101
Wheston, *sb.* whetstone. T¹ 631
Whiche, *pron.* of what kind. A 40, 2675
Whiel, *sb.* wheel. T¹ 839
Whielen, *v.* wheel. T¹ 139
Whyte, *sb.* time. A 3329
Whippeltre, the cornel-tree. A 2923
Wyde-whare, *adv.* widely. B 136, T³ 404
Wierdes, **Wirdes**, *sb. pl.* fates. T³ 617, L 2580
Wight, *adj.* strong, swift, brave. A 4086, B 3457
Wighte, *sb.* weight, A 2145, T² 1385; A lite wight, a little while, A 4283
Wyke, *sb.* week. B 1461
Wikke, *adj. pl.* evil. B 118
Wilne, *v.* will, desire, I 517; **Willed**, *pret.* willed, Bl. 1261
Wiltow, wilt thou
Wylugh, *sb.* willow. A 2922
Wympul, *sb.* wimple. A 151
Wyn ape. H 44. See note
Wyndas, *sb.* windlass. F 184
Wyndre, *v.* trim. R 1020
Wynsynges, *adj.* lively. A 3263
Wynt, *pres. s.* windeth. turns. I. 85
Wirdes, *sb. pl.* Fates. I. 2580
Wys, *adv.* certainly, surely. A 2786, T² 887
Wise, *sb.* fashion. A 2370
Wisly, *adv.* surely. B 1061
Wisse, *v.* guide, D 1415, T¹ 622; *imp.* *ABC* 155
Wisse, *pret.* washed. R 96
Wyst, *p.p.* known. HF¹ 351
Wyte, *imper.* blame, A 3140; **Wite at**, impute, G 621
Witen, *pres. pl.* know. A 1794
Withholden, *v.* restrain, B 1512; **Withholdeth**,

pres. retains, Bo. 1245; **Withholde**, retained, B 2200
Withouten, *prep.* besides. A 461
Withsaye, *pres. subj.* contradict, abjure, G 447; **Withseyen**, A 1140
Wityng, *s.* knowledge. A 1611
Wivere, *sb.* viper. T³ 1010
Wlatson, *adj.* loathsome. B 4243
Wodewales, *sb. pl.* orioles. R 658
Wol, *pres. s.* will. A 723
Wolde, *pret.* would. A 954
Wolle, *sb.* wool. C 910
Woltow, wilt thou. A 1544
Wombe, *sb.* belly. I 769
Won, *sb.* hope. T⁴ 1181
Wonde, *v.* turn aside, change. L 1187
Wonde, *pret.* dwelt. L 2253
Wonder, *adj.* wondrous. B 1045
Wondermost, *adj. sup.* most wonderful. HF³ 969
Wone, *sb.* custom, wont. A 335, B 1694
Wone, *sb.* plenty. R 1673
Woned, *p.p.* accustomed. Bl. 150
Wonger, *sb.* pillow. B 2102
Wonynges, *sb.* living, dwelling. A 388, 606
Woned, *pret.* dwelt. B 4406
Wood, *adj.* mad. A 184
Wood, *sb.* blue dye. *Former Age* 17
Woodeth, *pres. s.* is distraught, rages. G 467, Bo. 1328
Woodly, *adv.* madly. A 1301
Woodnesse, *sb.* madness. C 496
Woon, *sb.* place, dwelling. B 1091, HF³ 76
Woot, *pres. s.* know, A 1813; *pret.* knew, A 1525
Wopen, *p.p.* wept. T¹ 941
Word, *sb.* for Ord, beginning. T³ 702
Wortes, *sb. pl.* vegetables. B 4411
Worthen, *v.* fare; **Lete him worthen**, let him alone, T³ 320; **Worth**, *imperat.* Bo. 310
Worthy, *adj.* brave. B 2107
Wost, knowest
Wowe, *v.* woo. T⁵ 791
Wowke, *sb.* week. A 1539
Wraw, *adj.* indignant. H 46
Wrawful, *adj.* perverse. I 677
Wre, **Wren**, **Wrene**, *v.* cover. L 735, R 6359, T² 539, R 56
Wreche, *sb.* vengeance, punishment. B 3403, T² 784
Wreighe, *p.p.* covered, L 1201; *pret.* T³ 1056
Wreya, *sub. pres.* betray. A 3507
Wreyng, *sb.* betrayal. B 5220
Wrekere, *sb.* avenger. Bo. 1385
Wrenohe, *sb.* deceit, R 4292; **Wrenches**, *pl.* C 1081
Wreththe, *sb.* wrath. T³ 110
Wrye, *p.p.* hidden. T³ 620
Wrye, **Wryen**, *v.* turn, twist, T² 906, H 262, Bl. 626; **Wryed**, *p.p.* twisted, A 3283
Wryne, *v.* cover. R 6683, 6819
Wryth, *pres. s.* winds. T³ 1231
Writhen, *v.* turn. Bo. 1676
Wroken, *p.p.* avenged. T¹ 88
Wroteth, *pres.* digs with the snout. I 157
Y-, *prefix to past participles*; a few instances are given below
Yaf, *pret.* gave. A 227
Yalte, *pret.* yielded; **Yalte him**, betook himself, R 4904

GLOSSARY

Yare, *a.tj.* ready. L 2270
Y-bet, *p.p.* beaten. D 1285
Y-bete, stamped, illuminated. A 979
Y-blent, *p.p.* blended. A 3808
Y-bleynt, *p.p.* blenched, started aside. A 3753
Y-brent, *p.p.* burnt. A 946
Y-clenched, *p.p.* clumped. A 1991
Y-corve, *p.p.* cut. A 2013
Y-crased, *p.p.* broken. Bl 324
Y-iel, *adj.* idle; **in ydel**, in vain
Ydolastre, *sb.* idolater. I 749
Ye, *adv.* yea, yes. B 1841
Yecchyngs, *sb.* itching. R 2450
Yed, *p.p.* eyed. T⁴ 1459
Yeddynges, *sb. pl.* proverbial sayings. A 257
Yede, *pret.* went, G 1141; **Yeden**, *pl.* T² 936
Yelpe, *v.* boast. A 2238
Yelw, *adj.* yellow. Bl. 856
Yerde, *sb.* rod, stick. T² 154, A 149, T² 1427, A 1387
Yerne, *adv.* readily, eagerly, quickly. C 398, D 993, PF 21, T³ 376
Yerne, *adj.* brisk. A 3257
Yeten, *v.* get. Bo. 253
Yexeth, *pres. s.* hiccups. A 4151
Y-feore, *adv.* together. B 304
Y-frounced, *p.p.* wrinkled. R 155
Y-go, *p.p.* gone. A 286
Y-grave, *p.p.* dug. L 204
Y-hede, *p.p.* hid. Bl. 175
Y-hent, *p.p.* seized. C 863
Y-herd, *p.p.* haired. A 3737
Yif, *conj.* if. T² 1063
Y-korven, *p.p.* cut. B 1801
Y-lad, *p.p.* lead, carted. A 530

Y-lik, *adv.* alike. A 592
Ymages, *sb. pl.* astrological figures
Y-meynd, *p.p.* mingled. A 2170
Ymel, *prep.* among. A 4172
Ymped, *p.p.* grafted. R 5137
Ympes, *sb. pl.* grafts, shoots, saplings. R 6293, B 3146
Ympne, *sb.* hymn. L 422
Ynde, *sb.* indigo. R 67
Ynly, *adv.* inwardly. Bl. 276
Y-nome, *p.p.* taken. T¹ 242, L 2343
Yolden, *p.p.* yielded. A 3052, Bo. 211
Yollededen, *pret. pl.* yelled. B 4579
Youlyng, *sb.* yelling. A 1278
Yow, *you*. B 4610
Y-piked, *p.p.* picked out. G 941
Y-plited, *p.p.* pleaded. Bo. 61
Y-preved, *p.p.* proved. A 483
Y-purfiled, *p.p.* trimmed. A 193
Y-reke, *p.p.* spread about. A 3882
Ys, *sb.* ice. HF³ 40
Y-shete, *p.p.* shut. B 560
Y-shore, *p.p.* shorn, shaven. T⁴ 996
Y-spreynd, *p.p.* sprinkled. A 2169
Y-stalled, *p.p.* throned. HF³ 274
Y-stikked, *p.p.* stabbed. F 1176
Y-strawed, *p.p.* stewed. Bl. 628
Yvele, *adv.* ill. B 1897
Yvy leef, *sb.*; **Pipen in an yvy leef**, 'go whistle,' A 1838
Yvoire, *sb.* ivory. Bl. 945
Y-wis, *adv.* certainly. A 3277
Y-worth, *p.p.* become. Bl. 578
Y-wrien, **Y-wrye**, *p.p.* veiled, hid. Bl. 627, A 2904, T⁴ 1654
Y-writhen, *p.p.* wrapped. R 160

THE END

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